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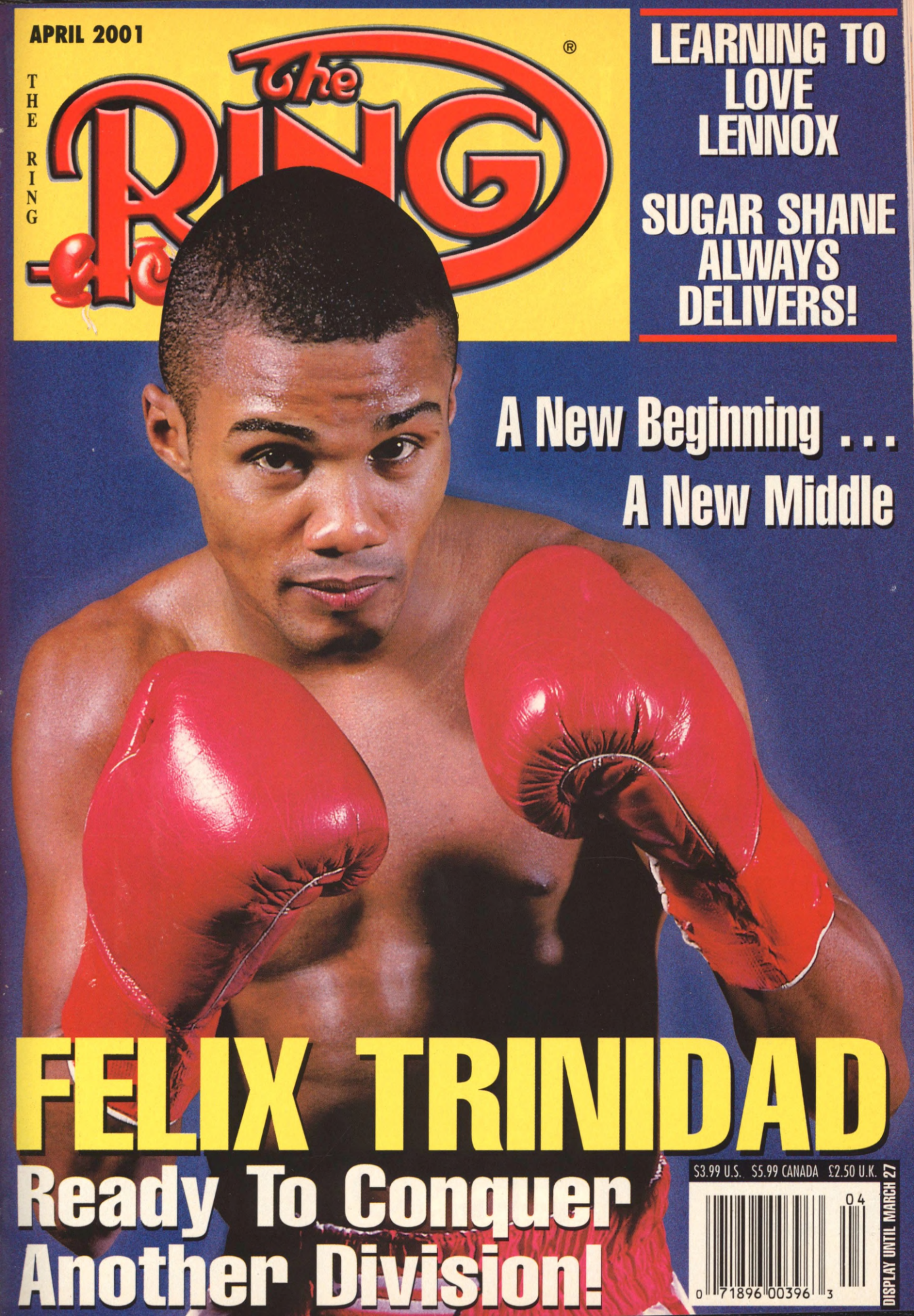

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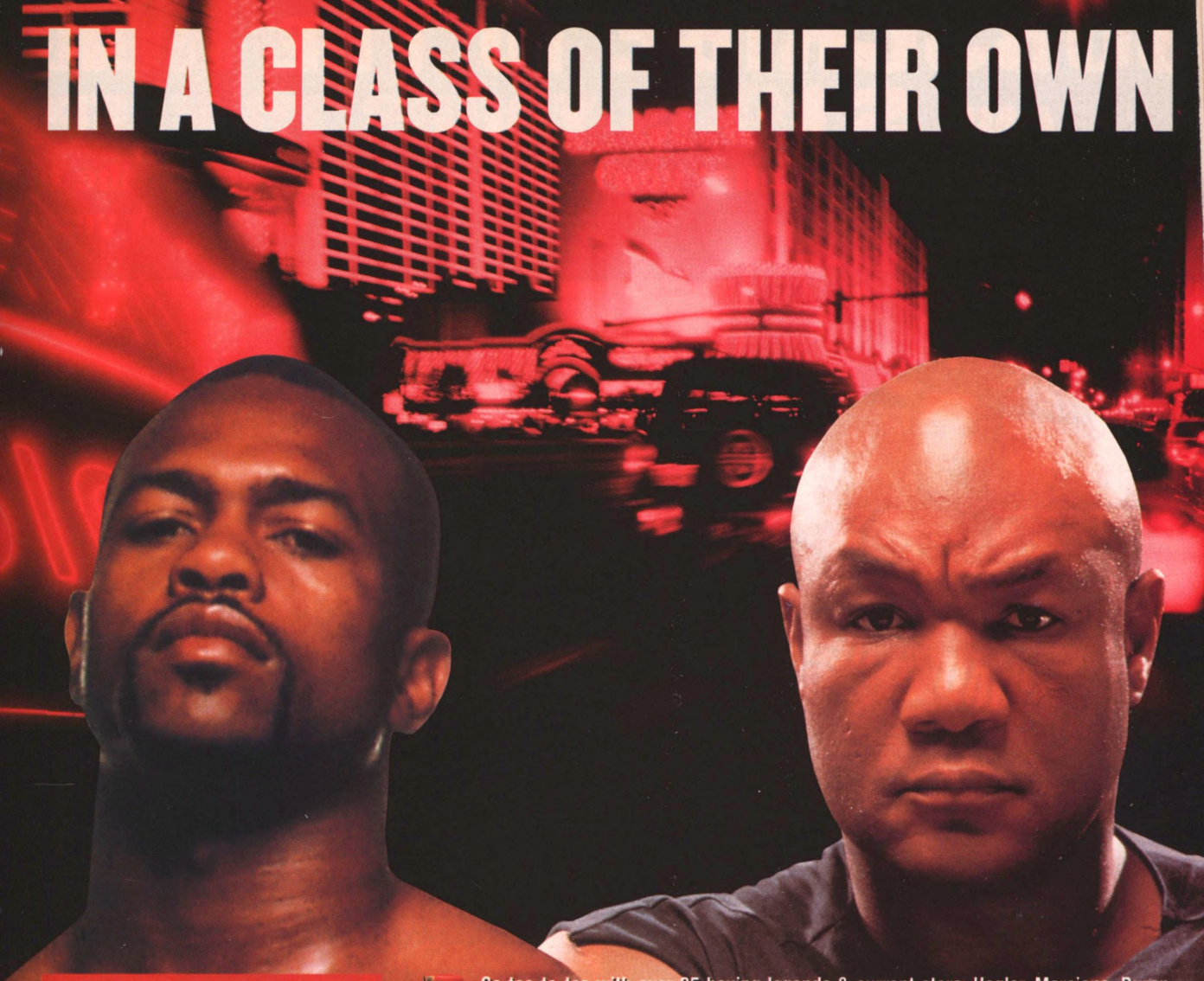

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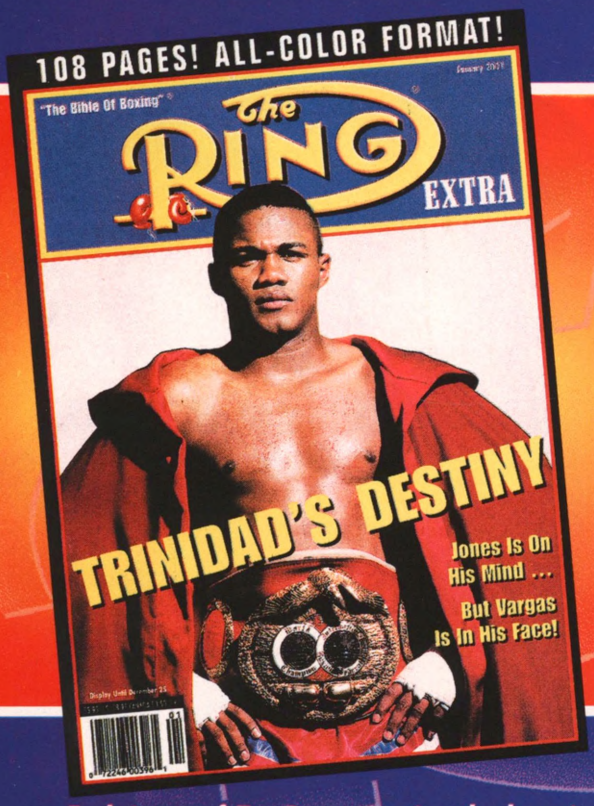

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CONTENTS

April 2001

page 22

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

FEATURES

22 **WHEN WE HAVE A JONES FOR EXCITEMENT, SUGAR SHANE ALWAYS DELIVERS!**
Boxing's Pound-For-Pound King Never Fails To Electrify
By Eric Raskin

28 **LEARNING TO LOVE LENNOX, DR. OF "BOXINGOLOGY"**
If You Call Lewis Boring, You're Missing The Point
By Nigel Collins

34 **FELIX TRINIDAD PREPARES TO CONQUER ANOTHER DIVISION!**
Tito Launches A New Beginning For The Middles
By Eric Raskin

40 **IS BOXING MINDING ITS OWN BUSINESS?**
The Action Is Up, But The Numbers Are Down
By Bernard Fernandez

46 **1950s LIGHT HEAVY PAUL ANDREWS**
Not Winning The Title Saved His Soul
By Pete Ehrmann

page 28

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/ALLSPORT

page 34

PHOTO BY BRIAN CANNON/OKP

Ringside Reports And Analyses

54 **FIGHTER OF THE MONTH & RINGSIDE REPORTS**

Ratings

13 **RATINGS ANALYSIS**

14 **THE RING'S INTERNATIONAL RATINGS AND RECORDS**

64 **WBA, WBC, & IBF RATINGS**

DEPARTMENTS

4 **RINGSIDE,** *by Nigel Collins*

8 **ROUND ONE**

16 **CAMERA CLICKS**

18 **RYAN OUT LOUD,** *by Jeff Ryan*

20 **NEW FACES: Middleweight Tokunbo Olajide,** *by Joe Santoliquito*

52 **WORLDWIDE FIGHT RESULTS**

66 **THE RING CLASSIC: TERRY McGOVERN, PART II,** *by Sam Andre*

72 **COME OUT WRITING**

74 **LOOKING AHEAD,** *by Eric Raskin*

Cover:
Felix Trinidad
by Chris Farina

Cover Design:
Joe Kalman

RINGSIDE

It's Tuesday already, but I'm still feeling the afterglow of that dynamite natural high that accompanies the witnessing of a great fight. The buzz doesn't usually last this long, but I think it was intensified by the fact that last weekend's premier event, the magnificent Felix Trinidad-Fernando Vargas struggle, was surrounded by a cornucopia of quality boxing. It was that rarest of events for the beleaguered Sweet Science, a big fight weekend when everything went right!

Adding to the artistic success of the Trinidad-Vargas weekend was the rousing brawl between Bernard Hopkins and Antwun Echols the day before, a rough-and-tumble melee that brought back memories of the days when the 160-pound class was one of boxing's glamour divisions. And that wasn't all. Marco Antonio Barrera, William Joppy, and Ricardo Lopez all enhanced their status with impressive victories that will lead to bigger and better fights. Perhaps best of all, there wasn't a controversial decision among the lot, thanks, no doubt, to the fact that all of the aforementioned fights ended early, which was a blessed relief in the wake of the Lennox Lewis-David Tua jab-a-thon.

Yes, boxing delivered big time the first weekend of December, showcasing itself at its best. True, it was a bit disappointing when only 10,627 customers turned up at the Mandalay Bay Event Center, a venue that holds more than 12,000 for boxing. But the pay-per-view sales were encouraging, as approximately 520,000 households purchased the fight. That made it the second-highest grossing PPV show of the year, topped only by Shane Mosley-Oscar De La Hoya, which did 580,000 buys.

When you consider the punch they delivered, an argument could be made that both Trinidad-Vargas and Mosley-De La Hoya should have done twice the business. But boxing is currently paying for its past sins, many of which are still fresh in people's minds. The only thing to do is keep making the best fights possible, and eventually the fans will come back, but it's going take a preponderance of evidence for boxing to win its case in the court of public opinion.

Still, I'm heartened by the fact that Trinidad-Vargas sold significantly better than Lewis-Tua (420,000) and Mike Tyson-Andrew Golota (450,000). It shows that many budget-conscious fans were savvy enough to save their money for something really special.

I've always maintained that there's nothing wrong with boxing that good fights can't fix, and I still believe that. But it's going to take time and consistency. There were a lot of outstanding fights in 2000, but they were overshadowed by the stench emanating from the IBF trial and the surreal carnival Tyson's career has become. The good fights got lost in the crud surrounding them.

Faced with a plunging bottom line, promoters seem to have finally gotten the message and are beginning to make the matches that we really want to see. If it comes off as scheduled, you will have already seen the splendid Floyd Mayweather-Diego Corrales grudge match and will be looking forward to the Naseem Hamed-Marco Antonio Barrera battle later this year. These, like Trinidad-Vargas, are the kind of quality fights we desperately need to turn the sport around. And if this sort of matchmaking continues, it won't be long before a helluva lot more people will be experiencing that overwhelming rush only a great fight can provide.

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

Volume 80, No. 4 **April 2001**

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THE RING (ISSN: 0035-5410), Vol. 80, No. 4 (April 2001), is published monthly by London Publishing Co., 7002 W. Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002. Periodicals postage paid at Ambler, PA 19002 and additional post offices. Postmaster: Send change of address notices to: THE RING, P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9, Marion, OH 43306-8121. Single copy price $3.99 ($5.99 in Canada, £2.50 in U.K.). Subscription price $59.64 in the U.S., $69.24 in Canada and remaining countries. Not responsible for the loss or non-return of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage.

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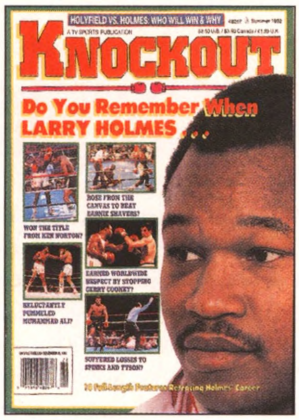

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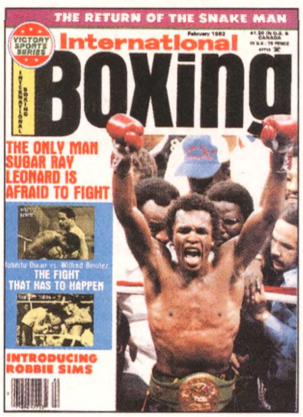

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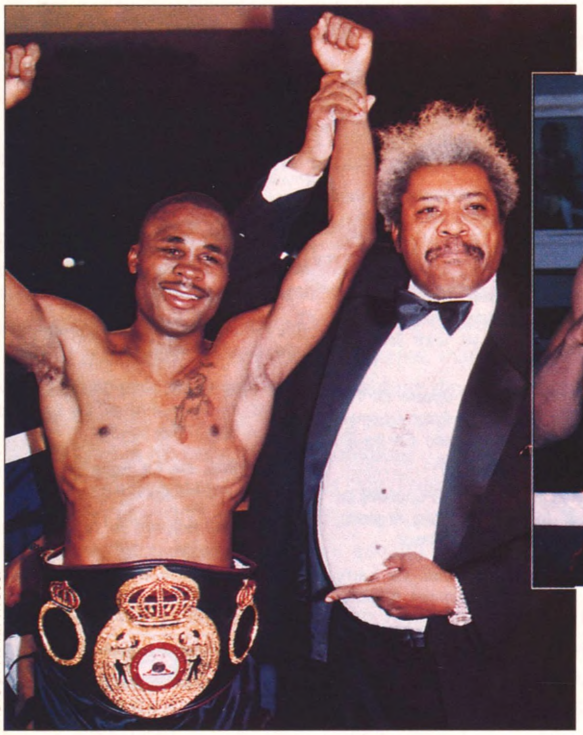
ROUND ONE

HOLMES & PAGE FLY KING'S COOP

Ho ho ho! Two lawsuits from disgruntled boxers were stuffed in Don King's Christmas stocking. The Hairy One is being sued by WBC middleweight champion Keith Holmes and former WBA welterweight champion James Page, both of whom seek to sever their business relationship with him.

Holmes, in papers filed in the U.S. District Court in Wilmington, Delaware, is also seeking unspecified damages. Of the two, Holmes seems to have a stronger case, though we have yet to hear King's side of the story. Holmes, 35-2 (23), claims that his contract calls for DKP to promote three bouts a year, and that King failed to live up to the contract in the third year, which ended May 27, 2000. According to Holmes, the only fight covered by the final year of his contract with King was his defeat of Andrew Council, September 24, 1999. Holmes, 28, did defeat Robert McCracken on April 29, 2000, but according to the lawsuit, that bout was not promoted by King and was specifically excluded from the three bouts allegedly required by the contract.



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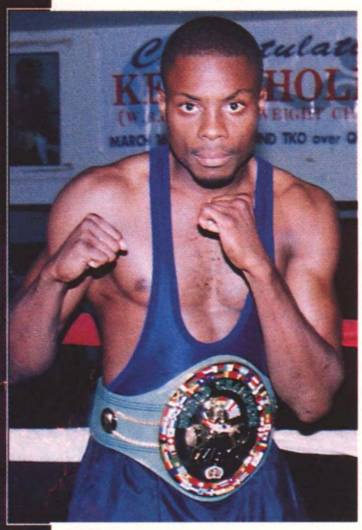
Page and King in happier times



Holmes also wants out

The 29-year-old Page, who told Jay Heater of *Contra Costa Times* that he was "suing everybody," has been out of action since July 24, 1999, when he stopped Freddie Pendleton. Page was scheduled to defend against Andrew "Six Heads" Lewis, the WBA's number-one contender, on August 12, 2000, but balked at the $112,000 purse King was offering and pulled out.

"I'm not fighting for $15,000 to $20,000," said Page, who claimed that is all he usually takes home from his purse after he's paid his manager, promoter, and trainer.

Page, 25-3-(19), has subsequently been stripped by the WBA, and has also taken the Venezuela-based organization to court in Philadelphia in an effort to regain the belt he never lost in the ring.

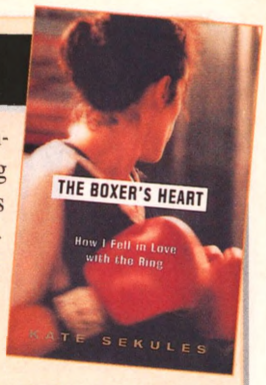
Page's situation is aggravated by the fact that King's son, Carl King, is his manager of record, even though rap entrepreneur James Prince has been acting in a managerial capacity since shortly after the Pendleton fight.

Of the two, Page would be the greater financial loss due to the fact that he's a welterweight, which makes highly lucrative matches with Shane Mosley and Oscar De La Hoya possibilities for the future. On the other hand, Page is somewhat of a problem child, having spent time in alcohol rehab last year.

Holmes is no great prize either. Although he doesn't have the personal problems Page does, his fights are generally lackluster and fans aren't exactly storming King's office, demanding to see him fight.

Still, the leverage that comes with having a beltholder or top contender under contract is worth fighting for, and King isn't likely to let this unhappy pair go without a battle.

THE BOXING BOOKSHELF



Kate Sekules is a much better writer than fighter (0-2), and *The Boxer's Heart: How I Fell In Love With The Ring* (Villard, 238 pages, hard cover, $35.95), is her account of her own brief stab at boxing and a treatise on women's boxing in general. The book conceivably might soften the politically incorrect recalcitrance toward battling babes of some who wonder how we went from deciding that a woman can do anything a man does to the notion that a woman *must* do *everything* a man does.

I confess to being on the side that thinks, even when it's not a downright joke, women's boxing is plain creepy. But, as my wife points out, perhaps no more so than two males sculpting one another's faces with gloved fists. If, like Ms. Sekules, the females training at Gleason's Gym in New York find fulfillment and nobility in throwing, ducking, and surviving malevolent left hooks, they ought to be as entitled as anyone else to, in that immortal phrase of Judge Lane's, get it on. Thanks to Sekules' deft, funny, and honest pen, their efforts and the sweat and blood expended on them have this troglodyte's grudging respect. But still I wonder if, notwithstanding her reflections on her own tomboyhood, Sekules didn't choose the ring for the same reason she once worked as a phone girl in a brothel—"because I thought it would be interesting to get to know the girls." Still, worse books have been written for better reasons.

Sekules' book is weakest in its attempt to psychoanalytically defend and justify women's boxing, and best when she just reports on her own experiences in the gym and between the ropes. Sekules' description of her first professional match against the much taller Jen "Raging Belle" Childs—"the Sears Tower of women's boxing"—is excellent and entertaining. (e.g.: Getting hit with a Childs right was "horrible, like being woken up at dawn by a firetruck.")

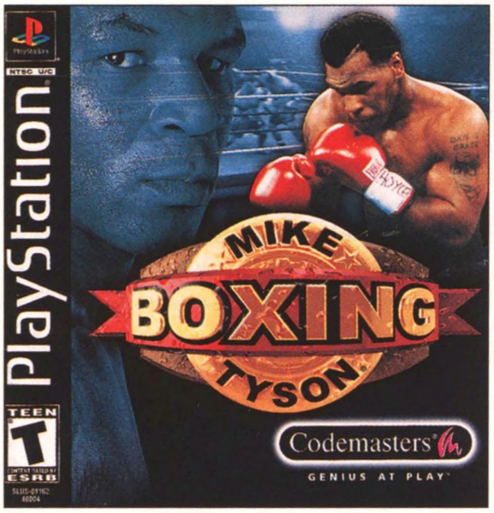
Sekules' take on the future of distaff boxing is, I think, a mite too optimistic. In spite of the increased patronage of gals at Gleason's and the attention garnered by the glowering daughters of ring antiques, women's boxing is a far cry from "normal." It's still a carnival act—Butterbean with a breastplate (which, by the way, somebody ought to recommend to him). But if, as is likely, we Philistines do end up in the spit bucket of ring history, books such as this one and movies like *Girlfight* will deserve more credit than Mia St. John's centerfold.

—Pete Ehrmann

A VIDEO GAME WITH BITE

If anyone ever told you to "be like Mike," they probably didn't mean Mike Tyson. But why be *like* Mike, anyway, when you can *be* Mike? The new video game *Mike Tyson Boxing* for Sony PlayStation provides players with a chance to get inside the body of Tyson (but not the head, fortunately) and pound away in perhaps the most realistic boxing game ever.

Using something called a physics-based fight engine, the folks at Codemasters who created the game have designed graphics and movement that simulate real boxing with startling accuracy. Though the PlayStation control pad is confusing as hell at first, once you figure out how to throw and block all the different punches, there's very little a real fighter can do that you can't. While most boxing games are won by whoever can mindlessly bang buttons the quickest, *Mike Tyson Boxing* becomes a contest of actual skill, where counterpunching and combinations are surprisingly useful.



There are a couple of major drawbacks, however, that will make a game like EA Sports' *Knockout Kings* preferable to some. One is that Tyson is the only real fighter in the game; the rest are just assorted fictional boxers. Compared with *Knockout Kings*, in which the user can pit dozens of great fighters past and present against one another, having to match Tyson against some random white guy named Rab McCabe is a major downer. The other problem is that, unlike nearly every sports game on the market these days, you can't create your own character. Half of the fun of these games is programming in yourself and your friends, and *Mike Tyson Boxing* doesn't provide that opportunity.

Nevertheless, if it's pure playability and realism you're looking for, the other boxing games can't quite compete. You just never get tired of seeing super slo-mos of a bloody fighter eating powershots, then crumpling lifelessly to the canvas. Especially when that fighter is Tyson.

—Eric Raskin

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
11-10-00	Horatio Garcia W 10 Victor Rosado	ESPN2	w	C	B-	C+
Decent fight; judges prefer Garcia's power over Rosado's combinations						
11-10-00	**Irene Pacheco W 12 Hawk Makepula**	**ESPN2**	**IBF fl**	**B+**	**B+**	**B-**
We guess you can make a case for Pacheco winning, but 118-110 and 117-111? Absurd						
11-11-00	John John Molina W 10 Ben Tackie	PPV	jw	B-	B	B
Tackie too slow, too one-dimensional; Molina too damn spry for a guy his age						
11-11-00	Jesse James Leija W 10 Ivan Robinson	PPV	l	C+	B+	B
Yes, Robinson probably should retire and no, Leija should not						
11-11-00	Cliff Etienne W 10 Lawrence Clay-Bey	PPV	h	B	A	A
Superb, action-packed war; the best heavyweight fight of the year						
11-11-00	**Lennox Lewis W 12 David Tua**	**PPV**	**WBC/IBF h**	**A+**	**A**	**C+**
Face it Lewis haters, the guy has done everything you've asked him to do; Tua's hook never a factor						
11-17-00	Andrew Lewis KO 2 Sebastian Valdez	ESPN2	w	C+	D+	C
"Six Heads" isn't the best welterweight in the world, but he has the coolest nickname						
11-17-00	Cory Spinks W 10 Edgar Ruiz	ESPN2	jw	C	D+	C
Spinks boxes and moves to decision win by far wider margin than scored by the judges						
11-24-00	Larry Marks W 10 Charles Murray	ESPN2	w	C-	B+	C
Marks outworks comebacking Murray for clear decision win						
11-24-00	Omar Sheika KO 1 Lloyd Bryan	ESPN2	sm	C-	C+	C+
Give Sheika a guy with wooden legs and he'll look great every time out						
11-26-00	David Reid W 10 Kirino Garcia	FOXSN	m	B+	A-	B
Let this be a lesson: Mackie Shilstone can't make a great fighter out of a good one						
12-1-00	Jose Luis Lopez KO 8 David Lewter	ESPN2	m	C	D-	D+
Same old Lopez; Lewter, down twice early, never should have made it to the eighth						
12-1-00	Angel Manfredy KO 5 Carlos Ramirez	ESPN2	l	C	D+	C-
Manfredy a little sluggish, but still too much for Ramirez, who claims hand injury to avoid beating						
12-1-00	Marco Antonio Barrera KO 6 Jesus Salud	HBO	jf	A-	C-	B+
That commotion you hear is Naseem Hamed slapping all heck out of his brother/manager Riath for signing to face Barrera						
12-1-00	**Bernard Hopkins KO 10 Antwun Echols**	**HBO**	**IBF m**	**A+**	**A**	**A-**
Is it us or does every Hopkins fight lately look like the same Keystone Cops movie?						
12-2-00	Christy Martin KO 1 Sabrina Hall	PPV	w	D	F	C+
We've said it before: Martin throws one heck of a right hand, and not just for a chick						
12-2-00	**William Joppy KO 4 Jonathan Reid**	**PPV**	**WBA m**	**A-**	**D-**	**C**
This was a good night for Joppy until he saw what Trinidad would do later on						
12-2-00	**Ricardo Lopez KO 3 Ratanapol Vorapin**	**PPV**	**IBF jfl**	**A**	**C+**	**B-**
Did someone say Lopez was ready to retire? We'd make him favorite over anyone up to 112						
12-2-00	**Felix Trinidad KO 12 Fernando Vargas**	**PPV**	**IBF/WBA jm**	**A+**	**A**	**A+**
Trinidad brilliant, victorious in see-saw battle that was everything we hoped it would be						
12-3-00	Adan Vargas W 12 Ivan Alvarez	FOXSN	b	C+	C	C+
Typical Vargas; lots of punches, little power, and a lopsided decision win						
12-3-00	**Steve Forbes KO 8 John Brown**	**FOXSN**	**IBF jl**	**B+**	**A-**	**B**
Good, close fight ends and Forbes claims vacant title when a left blows open Brown's eardrum						

Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime; FOXSN—Fox SportsNet; Uni—Univision; Tel—Telemundo

SOMETHING IN COMMON

Though the careers of two-time former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson and reigning WBC/IBF champ Lennox Lewis seem to be heading in opposite directions, the public clamors for a meeting between the two. And as different as the two fighters are, they do have something in common. Below is a chart of the seven common opponents Tyson and Lewis have faced through the years. You'll find the opponents' names in the middle, accompanied by the respective results of the fights along with the year they fought in parentheses.

MIKE TYSON	OPPONENT	LENNOX LEWIS
KO 7 (1987)	Tyrell Biggs	KO 3 (1991)
KO 5 ('99)	Frans Botha	KO 2 ('00)
KO 5 ('89), KO 3 ('96)	Frank Bruno	KO 7 ('93)
KO 3 ('00)	Andrew Golota	KO 1 ('97)
KO by 11 ('96), L Disq. 3 ('97)	Evander Holyfield	D 12, W 12 ('99)
KO 7, W 12 ('91)	Razor Ruddock	KO 2 ('92)
W 12 ('87)	Tony Tucker	W 12 ('93)

PHOTOS BY FRANK VITUCCI

OSCAR'S PACIFIC BLUES

New trainer Floyd Mayweather may come in handy to Oscar De La Hoya in more ways than one. Not only is he being entrusted with the task of rebuilding "The Golden Boy" as a fighter, but Mayweather, who was booted out of his own son's house several months ago, should also be able to advise De La Hoya on how a successful eviction works.

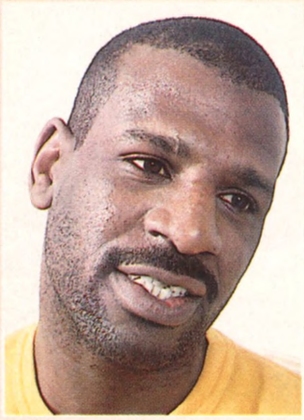
De La Hoya is having trouble giving Moakler the heave-ho

De La Hoya had tried to get ex-girlfriend Shanna Moakler, a star of the cable series *Pacific Blue* and the mother of De La Hoya's 1½-year-old daughter Atiana Cecilia, to leave his Santa Monica, California, house, but couldn't get the job done and has decided to sue Moakler. He is seeking more than $500,000 in damages and a court order barring her from the house. According to the suit, Moakler moved her parents and a friend in, threw a "Shanna's Freedom Party" there, dismissed De La Hoya's staff, made the house reek of cigarette smoke, denied workers access to make repairs, changed the locks, and won't let De La Hoya back in. She has also filed a paternity and child-support suit against the three-division former champion.

It could be worse, though, for De La Hoya. Remember when rapper Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes burned down footballer boyfriend Andre Rison's house? Oscar may not have access to his abode, but at least the house is still standing.

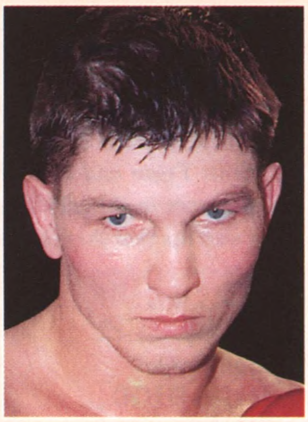
—Eric Raskin

OUTSIDE THE ROPES



Spinks: Arrested for assault

Hall of Fame ex-heavyweight and light heavyweight champion **Michael Spinks** was arrested at his Delaware home in mid-November and charged with second-degree assault in the beating of his 49-year-old girlfriend. The extent of the woman's injuries were not released, but it is known that she was admitted to the Wilmington Hospital emergency room. Spinks was taken into custody without incident and released later that same day on $2,500 bail ... Another former champ in trouble with the law is ex-WBA middleweight champ **Jorge Castro**, who received a three-year suspended sentence and had his driver's license lifted for eight years after his friend, **Zulma Duarte**, died when a car Castro was driving crashed into a truck. Castro's career, meanwhile, goes on, as he was scheduled to challenge **Juan Carlos Gomez** for the WBC cruiserweight title as we went to press ... One more fighter recently arrested was 1980s featherweight contender **Tommy Cordova**, who was charged in Albuquerque, New Mexico, with criminal sexual contact of a minor and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. An 11-year-old girl claimed that Cordova touched her in an inappropriate manner ... The legendary **Blue Horizon** in Philadelphia, which was nearly shut down due to safety hazards in the summer of 2000, is expected to get some of the renovation work it needs in the spring of 2001. According to *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, in early-November the city came up with the $1-million in matching funds it needed to secure a $1-million grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to begin fixing up the 135-year-old building. It is estimated, though, that several million dollars beyond the initial $2-million will be needed to complete all the necessary repairs ... **Don King** isn't the only promoter whose champions are walking out on him. Arch-rival **Bob Arum** recently lost IBF cruiserweight champion **Vassiliy Jirov**, who felt Top Rank's attention was focused too heavily on their Hispanic fighters instead of on him. "They were very helpful, but now it's time to move on," Jirov said of the company that has promoted him since he turned pro in '97 ... One death notice that should have been included last month, but slipped through the cracks: **Joseph "Blackie" Gennaro**, president of the minor governing body known as the IBC, passed away in Canfield, Ohio, in late-September. Gennaro co-managed heavyweight **Earnie Shavers** and worked for the Pennsylvania State Athletic Commission and the Ohio State Boxing Commission prior to joining the IBC.



Jirov: Broke ranks with Arum

THE PUNCHLINES

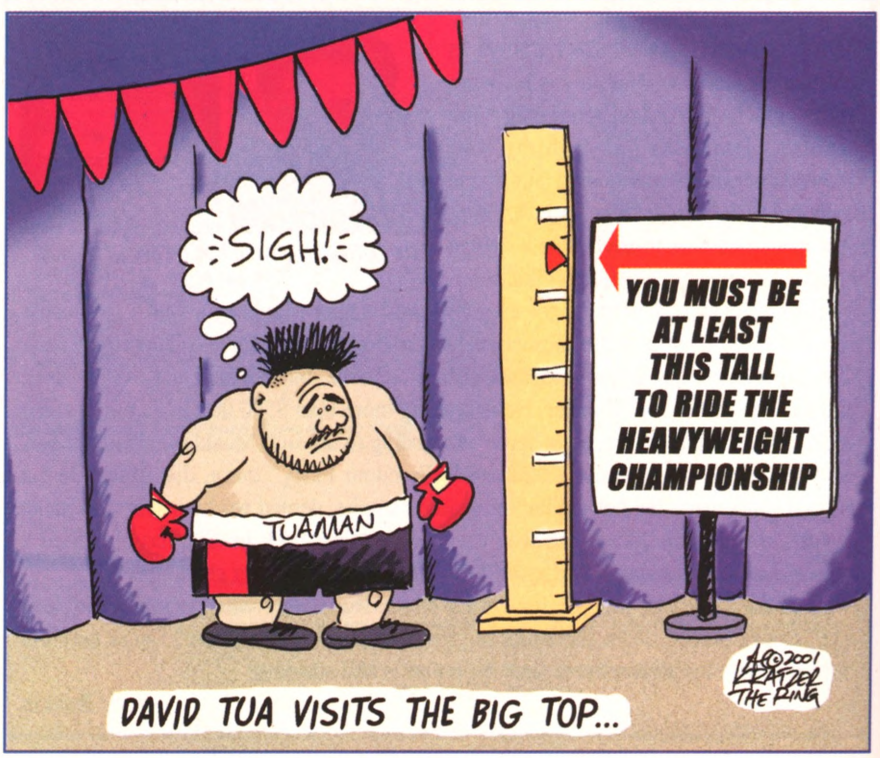
"This kid woke up one day on third base and he's dumb enough to think he hit a triple."

—IBA President Dean Chance, on Top Rank's Todd DuBoef

"There are no Roberto Durans or Andrew Golotas in here."

—Philadelphia Eagles running back Brian Mitchell, on his teammates in the locker room after a come-from-behind victory over the Pittsburgh Steelers

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



"THE BIBLE OF BOXING"

RATINGS ANALYSIS

(For period ended December 3, 2000)

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **SHANE MOSLEY** Welterweight
2. **FELIX TRINIDAD** Junior Middleweight
3. **ROY JONES** Light Heavyweight
4. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA** Welterweight
5. **DIEGO CORRALES** Junior Lightweight
6. **NASEEM HAMED** Featherweight
7. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER** Junior Lightweight
8. **LENNOX LEWIS** Heavyweight
9. **ERIK MORALES** Featherweight
10. **BERNARD HOPKINS** Middleweight

HEAVYWEIGHTS: Tua's lopsided points loss to Lewis causes the Samoan to slide from second to fifth. His demotion allows Tyson, Johnson, and Holyfield all to move up one place each.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: No changes.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: No changes.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Larsen, who has been busy of late, replaces Markus Beyer at number 10.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Echols falls from fourth to fifth following his 10th-round TKO loss to Hopkins. He is overtaken by Krajnc (formerly fifth).

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: David Reid (third last issue) is gone now that he's moved up to the middleweight class. Reid's departure pushes everybody ranked below him up one spot each and makes room for Shibata Flores at 10th.

WELTERWEIGHTS: Former WBA champ James Page, who hasn't fought in more than a year, exits due to inactivity. Lewis (10th last issue) leapfrogs over Coley into the eighth spot due to greater activity. Jantuah enters the ratings at number 10.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: Molina (previously ranked at lightweight) moves into the ninth spot in the 140-pound class on the strength of his decision over Ben Tackie. The move pushes Green (ninth last issue) down to 10th and Hector Camacho Jr. out of the top 10.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: Tackie (seventh last issue) and Molina (ninth last issue) are gone because they're now campaigning at junior welter. This allows Grigorian (formerly eighth) and Dunne (10th last issue) to advance to seventh and eighth, respectively. The pair of vacancies are filled by Leija and Serrano, at ninth and 10th, respectively.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: The previously unranked Forbes crashes the ratings at number five due to his TKO of John Brown (10th last issue) to capture the vacant IBF title. Forbes' arrival pushes Baek, Sim, Chavez, Choi, and Garcia down one slot each, while Brown departs.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: No changes.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: Bredahl (formerly fifth) and Vargas (sixth last issue) advance to fourth and fifth, respectively, based on greater activity than idle Julio, who falls from fourth to sixth.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: Former champ Mark Johnson has not fought in more than a year and has been dropped entirely, which allows WBC titlist Tokuyama (second last issue) to take over first place. Penalosa (seventh last issue) jumps to fifth following his kayo of Ratanachai Vorapin.

FLYWEIGHTS: Makepula debuts at fourth, thanks to his controversial points loss to Pacheco, who stays at number two. David Guerault (10th last issue) leaves to make room of Makepula.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: With Makepula gone, Cob-Castro, Grigsby, and Arce all move up one place each to seventh, eighth, and ninth, respectively. Previously unrated Hidenobu Honda is now aboard at 10th.

STRAWWEIGHTS: No changes.

POUND-FOR-POUND: Trinidad's spectacular victory over Vargas jumps "Tito" from third to second, which means that Jones (second last issue) slips a notch to third. Trinidad was considered for the number-one spot, but the fact that Mosley beat De La Hoya more definitively than Trinidad did, plus Mosley's total dominance of everybody he's fought, keeps "Sugar Shane" atop the P-4-P ratings. Vargas (previously ninth) exits, making room for Hopkins to regain a foothold at the 10th position. Lewis' one-sided decision over Tua advances him from 10th to eighth, while Morales (eighth last issue) is now ninth. ■

THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended December 3, 2000

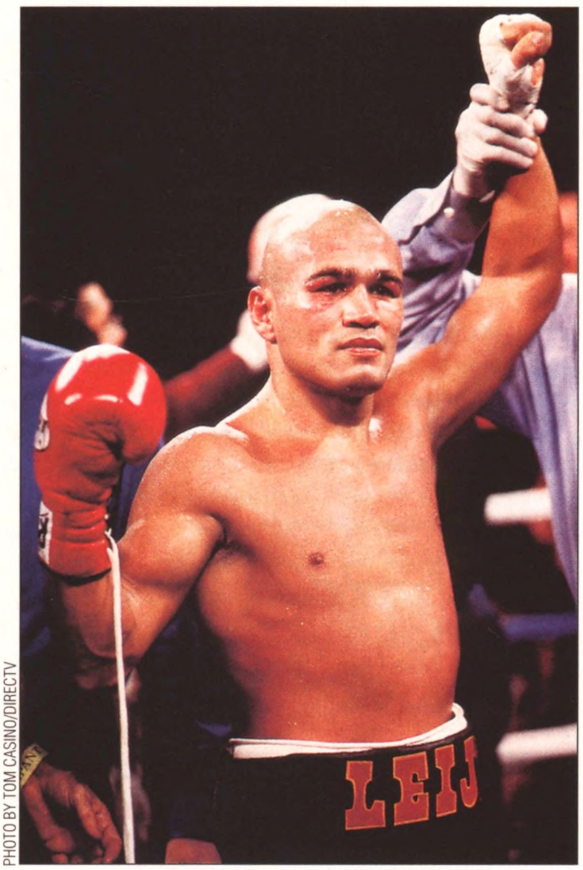


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/DIRECTV

Jesse James Leija returns to the lightweight rankings after beating Ivan Robinson

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

In each division, fighters are ranked according to their abilities and accomplishments.

Being champion does not necessarily mean a fighter will be rated at the top of his weight class.

These ratings reflect how the best fighters in the world rate against one another.

Ratings By The Editors

Records By Fight Fax Inc.

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

1. **LENNOX LEWIS** — England 38-1-1 (WBC/IBF Champ)
2. **MIKE TYSON** — Catskill, NY 49-3
3. **KIRK JOHNSON** — Canada 30-0-1
4. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD** — Fairburn, GA 37-4-1 (WBA Champ)
5. **DAVID TUA** — New Zealand 37-2
6. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO** — Ukraine 35-1
7. **OLEG MASKAEV** — Staten Island, NY 20-3
8. **MICHAEL GRANT** — Norristown, PA 31-1
9. **HASIM RAHMAN** — Baltimore, MD 34-2
10. **CHRIS BYRD** — Flint, MI 31-2

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

1. **FELIX TRINIDAD** — Puerto Rico 39-0 (WBA/IBF Champ)
2. **FERNANDO VARGAS** — Oxnard, CA 20-1
3. **IKE QUARTEY** — Ghana 34-2-1
4. **FRANCISCO CASTILLEJO** — Spain 51-4 (WBC Champ)
5. **HARRY SIMON** — Namibia 20-0
6. **WINKY WRIGHT** — St. Petersburg, FL 40-3
7. **BRONCO McKART** — Monroe, MI 42-3
8. **YORY BOY CAMPAS** — Mexico 76-4
9. **TONY MARSHALL** — Albany, NY 34-8-6
10. **SHIBATA FLORES** — Mexico 41-8

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

1. **NASEEM HAMED** — England 35-0
2. **ERIK MORALES** — Mexico 38-0
3. **PAUL INGLE** — England 23-1 (IBF Champ)
4. **DERRICK GAINER** — Pensacola, FL 34-5 (WBA Champ)
5. **GUTY ESPADAS** — Mexico 33-2 (WBC Champ)
6. **JOHNNY TAPIA** — Albuquerque, NM 48-2-2
7. **FRED NORWOOD** — St. Louis, MO 37-1-1
8. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ** — Mexico 33-2
9. **MANUEL MEDINA** — Mexico 58-11
10. **MBULELO BOTILE** — South Africa 26-1

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

1. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA** — Mexico 52-3
2. **BONES ADAMS** — Henderson, KY 40-3-3 (WBA Champ)
3. **LEHLO LEDWABA** — South Africa 31-1-1 (IBF Champ)
4. **WILLIE JORRIN** — Sacramento, CA 27-0 (WBC Champ)
5. **NESTOR GARZA** — Mexico 38-2
6. **ENRIQUE SANCHEZ** — Mexico 28-1-1
7. **MANNY PACQUAIO** — Philippines 29-2
8. **ANTONIO CERMENO** — Venezuela 38-3
9. **OSCAR LARIOS** — Mexico 38-2-1
10. **MICHAEL BRODIE** — England 29-1

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

1. **PAULIE AYALA** — Ft. Worth, TX 31-1 (WBA Champ)
2. **TIM AUSTIN** — Cincinnati, OH 21-0-1 (IBF Champ)
3. **VEERAPOL SAHAPROM** — Thailand 27-1 (WBC Champ)
4. **JOHNNY BREDAHL** — Denmark 48-2
5. **ADAN VARGAS** — Mexico 35-2-1
6. **JORGE ELIECER JULIO** — Colombia 42-2
7. **JORGE LACIERVA** — Mexico 18-3-3
8. **RICARDO BARAJAS** — Mexico 21-1-1
9. **MAURICIO MARTINEZ** — Panama 18-3-1
10. **CUAUHTEMOC GOMEZ** — Mexico 48-8

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

1. **JUAN CARLOS GOMEZ**
   Germany *31-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **VASSILIY JIROV**
   Kazakhstan *26-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **FABRICE TIOZZO**
   France *42-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **JOHNNY NELSON**
   England *38-12-1*
5. **MARCELO DOMINGUEZ**
   Argentina *30-3-1*
6. **ARTHUR WILLIAMS**
   Pensacola, FL *33-5-1*
7. **CARL THOMPSON**
   England *27-5*
8. **JAMES TONEY**
   Las Vegas, NV *60-4-2*
9. **VIRGIL HILL**
   Bismarck, ND *45-3*
10. **LOUIS AZILLE**
    Jersey City, NJ *14-0-2*

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 175 pounds

1. **ROY JONES**
   Pensacola, FL *43-1 (WBC/WBA/IBF Champ)*
2. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI**
   Germany *42-0*
3. **ERIC HARDING**
   Philadephia, PA *19-1-1*
4. **REGGIE JOHNSON**
   Houston, TX *40-6-1*
5. **DAVID TELESCO**
   Port Chester, NY *23-3*
6. **MONTELL GRIFFIN**
   Chicago, IL *39-3*
7. **CHRIS JOHNSON**
   Canada *26-1-1*
8. **ANTONIO TARVER**
   Orlando, FL *16-1*
9. **GREG WRIGHT**
   Bronx, NY *18-6-2*
10. **DERRICK HARMON**
    Chicago, IL *20-1*

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

1. **SVEN OTTKE**
   Germany *20-0 (IBF Champ)*
2. **JOE CALZAGHE**
   Wales *29-0*
3. **BRUNO GIRARD**
   France *38-3-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **DINGAAN THOBELA**
   South Africa *40-7-2 (WBC Champ)*
5. **CHARLES BREWER**
   Philadelphia, PA *35-7*
6. **THOMAS TATE**
   Houston, TX *38-6*
7. **GLENN CATLEY**
   England *26-4*
8. **BYRON MITCHELL**
   Ozark, AL *21-1-1*
9. **JAMES BUTLER**
   Bronx, NY *17-1*
10. **MADS LARSEN**
    Denmark *35-1*

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

1. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
   Philadelphia, PA *38-2-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **WILLIAM JOPPY**
   Washington, D.C. *32-1-1 (WBA Champ)*
3. **KEITH HOLMES**
   Washington, D.C. *35-2 (WBC Champ)*
4. **ARMAND KRAJNC**
   Sweden *24-0*
5. **ANTWUN ECHOLS**
   Davenport, IA *24-4-1*
6. **HASSINE CHERIFI**
   France *30-4-1*
7. **BRIAN BARBOSA**
   Passaic, NJ *28-4*
8. **ANDREW COUNCIL**
   Washington, D.C. *30-7-3*
9. **SYD VANDERPOOL**
   Canada *28-2*
10. **HOWARD EASTMAN**
    England *30-0*

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

1. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Pomona, CA *36-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Whittier, CA *32-2*
3. **VERNON FORREST**
   Atlanta, GA *31-0*
4. **OBA CARR**
   Detroit, MI *51-3-1*
5. **WILFREDO RIVERA**
   Puerto Rico *31-4-1*
6. **THOMAS DAMGAARD**
   Denmark *22-0*
7. **SHANNAN TAYLOR**
   Australia *28-0-1*
8. **ANDREW LEWIS**
   Guyana *20-0-1*
9. **DERRELL COLEY**
   Capitol Heights, MD *34-2-2*
10. **KOFI JANTUAH**
    Ghana *20-0*

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

1. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Australia *25-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **ZAB JUDAH**
   Brooklyn, NY *25-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **SHARMBA MITCHELL**
   Washington, D.C. *47-2 (WBA Champ)*
4. **ANTONIO DIAZ**
   Coachella, CA *33-3*
5. **ENER JULIO**
   Colombia *21-3*
6. **RANDALL BAILEY**
   Miami, FL *22-1*
7. **TERRONN MILLETT**
   St. Louis, MO *22-2-1*
8. **MICKY WARD**
   Lowell, MA *35-10*
9. **JOHN-JOHN MOLINA**
   Puerto Rico *52-6*
10. **REGGIE GREEN**
    Clinton, MD *33-4*

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

1. **JOSE LUIS CASTILLO**
   Mexico *41-4-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **STEVE JOHNSTON**
   Denver, CO *30-2-1*
3. **PAUL SPADAFORA**
   Pittsburgh, PA *31-0 (IBF Champ)*
4. **TAKANORI HATAKEYAMA**
   Japan *24-1-2 (WBA Champ)*
5. **CESAR BAZAN**
   Mexico *38-3-1*
6. **ANGEL MANFREDY**
   Gary, IN *34-5-1*
7. **ARTUR GRIGORIAN**
   Uzbekistan *31-0*
8. **COLIN DUNNE**
   England *32-1*
9. **JESSE JAMES LEIJA**
   San Antonio, TX *41-5-2*
10. **GILBERTO SERRANO**
    Venezuela *20-5-1*

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

1. **DIEGO CORRALES**
   Sacramento, CA *33-0*
2. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER**
   Grand Rapids, MI *24-0 (WBC Champ)*
3. **JOEL CASAMAYOR**
   Miami, FL *23-0 (WBA Champ)*
4. **ACELINO FREITAS**
   Brazil *27-0*
5. **STEVE FORBES**
   Las Vegas, NV *19-1 (IBF Champ)*
6. **JONGKWON BAEK**
   South Korea *21-1-1*
7. **LAKVA SIM**
   Mongolia *12-2-1*
8. **JESUS CHAVEZ**
   Mexico *32-1*
9. **YONG SOO CHOI**
   South Korea *27-3-1*
10. **ROBERTO GARCIA**
    Oxnard, CA *33-2*

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

1. **MASAMORI TOKUYAMA**
   North Korea *22-2-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **LEO GAMEZ**
   Venezuela *33-7-1 (WBA Champ)*
3. **FELIX MACHADO**
   Venezuela *19-3-1 (IBF Champ)*
4. **IN JOO CHO**
   South Korea *18-1*
5. **GERRY PENALOSA**
   Philippines *42-3-2*
6. **JESUS ROJAS**
   Venezuela *33-8-3*
7. **HIDEKI TODAKA**
   Japan *17-3-1*
8. **YOKTHAI SITHOAR**
   Thailand *22-1-1*
9. **SAMSON TOYOTA-THAILAND**
   Thailand *38-0*
10. **ADONIS RIVAS**
    Nicaragua *16-1-1*

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

1. **ERIC MOREL**
   Madison, WI *27-0 (WBA Champ)*
2. **IRENE PACHECO**
   Colombia *25-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **MALCOLM TUNACAO**
   Philippines *11-0-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **HAWK MAKEPULA**
   South Africa *18-1*
5. **SORNPICHAI PISNURACHANK**
   Thailand *20-1*
6. **CHATCHAI DUTCHBOY GYM**
   Thailand *37-2*
7. **MEDGOEN TOYOTA-THAILAND**
   Thailand *20-1*
8. **SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT**
   Thailand *38-1*
9. **ALEJANDRO MONTIEL**
   Mexico *43-3*
10. **ISIDRO GARCIA**
    Los Angeles, CA *21-1-1*

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

1. **RICARDO LOPEZ**
   Mexico *49-0-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **YOSAM CHOI**
   South Korea *22-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **PICHIT C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand *22-1*
4. **BEBIS MENDOZA**
   Colombia *27-0 (WBA Champ)*
5. **ROSENDO ALVAREZ**
   Nicaragua *26-2-1*
6. **SAMAN SORJATURONG**
   Thailand *42-3-1*
7. **MELCHOR COB-CASTRO**
   Mexico *58-6-4*
8. **WILL GRIGSBY**
   St. Paul, MN *15-2-1*
9. **JORGE ARCE**
   Mexico *25-3-1*
10. **HIDENOBU HONDA**
    Japan *22-1*

STRAWWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 105 pounds

1. **ZOLANI PETELO**
   South Africa *16-2-2 (IBF Champ)*
2. **JOSE AGUIRRE**
   Mexico *24-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **JOMA GAMBOA**
   Philippines *29-5-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **NOEL ARAMBULET**
   Venezuela *12-2-1*
5. **CHANA PORPAOIN**
   Thailand *41-1-2*
6. **WANDEE SINGWANGCHA**
   Thailand *25-4*
7. **SONGKRAM PORPAOIN**
   Thailand *20-2-1*
8. **KERMIN GUARDIA**
   Columbia *32-2*
9. **JOSE GARCIA**
   Colombia *22-5-1*
10. **DANIEL REYES**
    Colombia *24-0*

CAMERA CLICKS

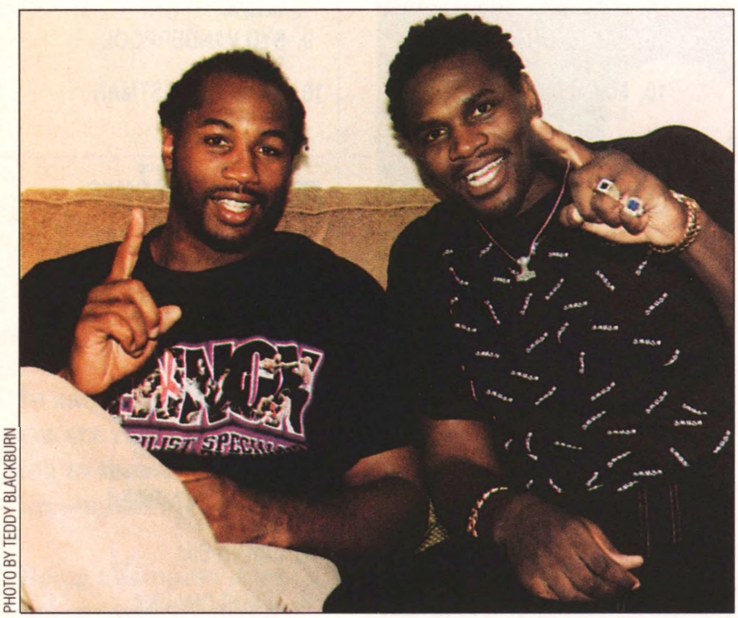


PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

Audley enough, the British are ruling heavyweight boxing. Following his dominant points win over David Tua, pro champ Lennox Lewis hangs out with Olympic champ Audley Harrison. Despite the history of English big men assuming the horizontal position, this shot of Lewis and Harrison chilling on the couch offers what would seem to be a rare opportunity to see the two heavyweights on their arses.

Wanted: Dead or alive! Young varmint, goes by the name Hector Camacho Jr., last seen stealing from boxing fans in Manhattan who paid good money to see him fight. Cash reward, bonus if you bring in his accomplice in criminal boredom, his father.

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Is it normal to have a 10-inch gap between where your protective cup ends and your trunks begin? Heavyweight Marcus Johnson was obviously having some equipment problems in his November bout with Derrick Jefferson, and everyone watching was thankful that ref Jim Santa stopped this bout in the first round. Perhaps Johnson's future lies in plumbing.

PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

Everybody is getting in on the razor-scooter fad, including recently retired British fighter Chris Eubank. Not surprisingly, Eubank is already claiming to be "simply the best" razor rider around.

PHOTO BY STEVE MATTEO/HBO

KO Nation's *"Knockouts" do more than just dance. They also ... hold round cards while they dance.*

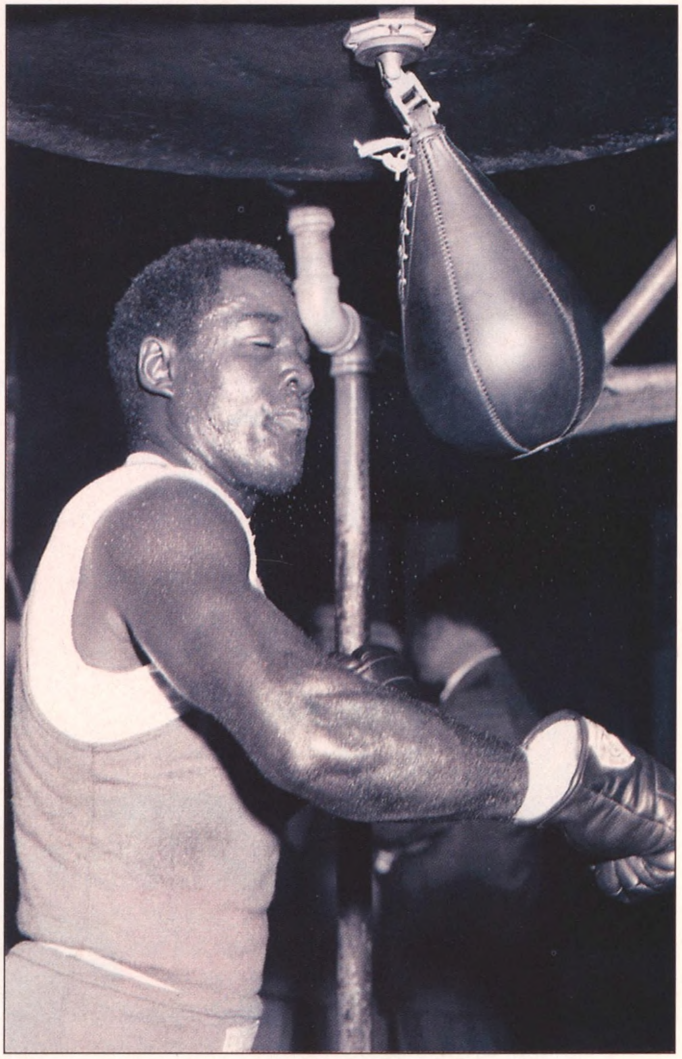
PHOTO BY RICK SOLOMON/ALLSPORT

Who do you think these blokes were rooting for in the Lennox Lewis-David Tua fight? Pardon us for tooting our own horns, but THE RING staff went five-for-five in predicting the Lewis victory, and to anyone foolish enough to pick Tua, we say you simply don't know Union Jack.

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

With Tommy Hearns and Laila Ali looking on, former heavyweight champ Mike Tyson grabs junior welterweight titleholder Zab Judah by the jewels. Tyson, Judah, and Ali were among the featured attractions on Hearns' first major promotional venture, on October 20 in Auburn Hills, Michigan.

NOSTALGIA CORNER



Apparently, the great Ezzard Charles didn't know the cardinal rule of fight preparation: Never set up your speedbag too close to the drain pipes. This one has to go down among the all-time great optical-illusion boxing photos.

RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

LET'S SEE SAMOA HIM

John Wooden, the legendary UCLA basketball coach, was fond of saying, "He who fails to plan, plans to fail." Well, what about he who plans but fails nonetheless? The "he" in question here is David Tua, who was about as ready for a shot at the heavyweight crown as a big man in today's day and age could ever be. So prepared was the hook-throwin' Samoan that he even found time to get his hair in fighting shape. Then, oddly, the guy who had always believed that valor is the better part of discretion got whacked a couple of times by Lennox Lewis' right hand and lost his will to decapitate.

"I did the best I could," Tua said afterward. No, David, you didn't.

"The Tuaman," who was giving away seven inches in height and 15 inches in reach, threw one punch at a time, never cut off the ring, and was unwilling to take the chances required to win. And isn't that ironic. After all, he'd taken more risks on the way to his title shot than anyone in the division except for Evander Holyfield. Tua's 38 bouts included clashes with fellow contenders John Ruiz, David Izon, Ike Ibeabuchi, Oleg Maskaev, and Hasim Rahman. Sure, there were some easy tuneups along the way, too, but Tua needed to pad his record about as much as Jennifer Love Hewitt needs to pad her bra.

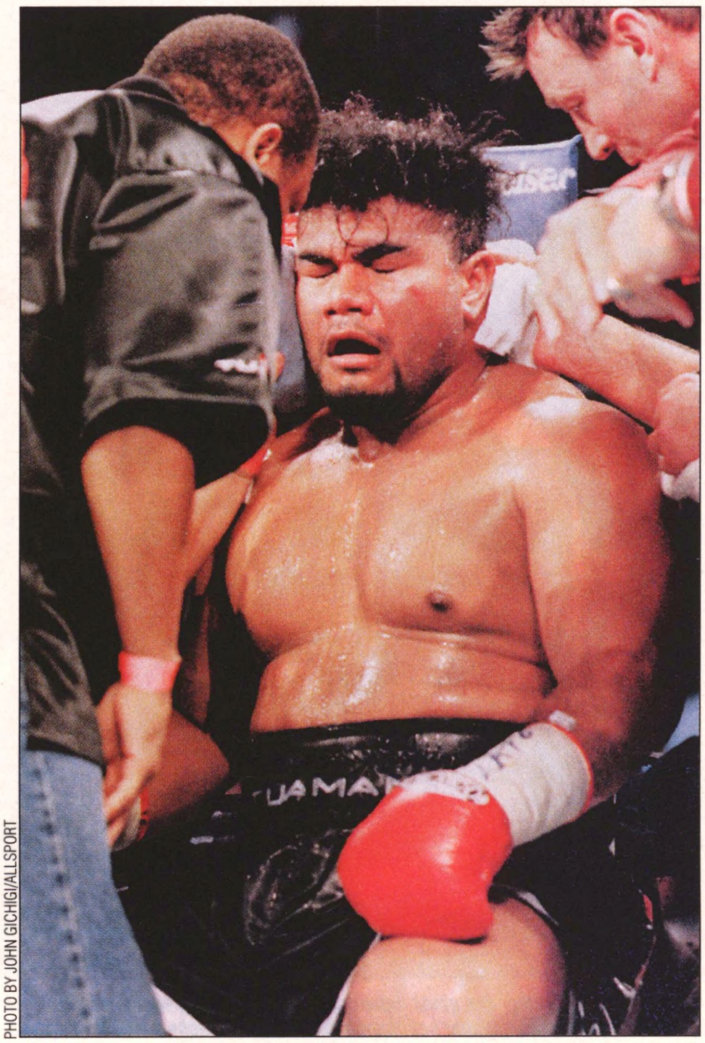


PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/ALLSPORT

Did Tua really do the best he could against Lewis?

So it's more than a little disconcerting that Tua was flicked away like a piece of lint on Lewis' robe. Had Tua won, it would have sent an unmistakable message to the rest of boxing's big men, a message along these lines: "See, *that's* how it's done! Come up the old-fashioned way, take on lots of tough guys, pass tests, build confidence, sharpen your tools, and you'll eventually wear the crown."

Now that Tua has fallen short, literally and figuratively, the natural tendency is to sour on him. How could he be so passive on his biggest night? Where was his body attack? Did he suffer a rib injury in the second round, as he later claimed, or was he merely looking for sympathy? Did a few early shots in the mug really zap his spirit? Will Tua ever again be worthy of our rapt attention and pay-per-view dollar?

Legitimate questions all. But no matter what the answer to them is, Tua isn't about to be written off by me. Anyone who possesses a lethal left hook, displays a good sense of humor, enters the ring to the sound of war drums beating and a guy blowing into a conch shell, has hair that resembles the rough at a public golf course, and takes on tougher foes en route to a title shot than many champions do when they're

on the throne, is the kind of fighter boxing needs. In every weight class.

Tua's biggest mistake (besides not growing seven inches in height by fight time) was thinking this was the same Lewis who went life-and-death with Ray Mercer and was wobbled early by Shannon Briggs. The same Lewis who could be separated from the feeling in his toes by a single bomb, like the one Oliver McCall landed six years earlier. As evidenced by his blowouts of Michael Grant and Frans Botha, as well as the instructional boxing video he filmed on November 11 with Tua's cooperation, the Briton's career has finally found its rhythm. And that rhythm doesn't seem likely to be disrupted anytime soon, not by Kirk Johnson, the remnants of Holyfield, or even a supposedly reinvigorated Mike Tyson.

PHOTO BY HOLLY STEIN/HBO

If a few more of these hooks had landed, who knows what would've happened?

Tua recovered just fine from a decision loss to Ibeabuchi in 1997, and though he was beaten convincingly by Lewis, he didn't suffer the kind of psyche-jolting spanking Grant did. So the conch shell and drums notwithstanding, Tua's days of making noise are far from over. And he has an endless number of routes he could take as he and his handlers study the road map. Don't forget that Tua is only 28, and his powerpunch will probably still be with him through two more presidential elections.

A rematch with Lewis is completely out of the question (Tua doesn't deserve one and the result would undoubtedly be the same), but Tua would be wise to target the winner of the sequel between paper, *uh,* WBA titlist Holyfield and John Ruiz. Tua has already shown that he needs less than 20 seconds to solve the mystery of Ruiz, and the Samoan's hook would likely send the increasingly immobile Holyfield into long-overdue retirement. While the WBA belt carries very little clout, and invites much scorn these days, it might actually be worth paying some attention to if Tua wore it.

For starters, it would be a lot more fun to watch WBA title fights that end in knockouts than sit through the traction-packed efforts of champion Holyfield or champion Ruiz. And Tua on a throne, even a diminished one, would create activity. Contenders who view Lewis as too dominant right now, or can't wait patiently in line behind Tyson for their turn, would probably elect to take a crack at the WBA title and Tua instead.

Even if Tua steers clear of the WBA crown, he still has a lot of rivals from which to choose. Thus far in his career, he has proven to be a throwback to the "Roaring '70s," when the George Foremans, Ken Nortons, Jerry Quarrys, Ron Lyles, Earnie Shaverses, Jimmy Youngs, and Joe Bugners squared off with each other even if the bouts were scheduled for only 10 rounds, there weren't any alphabet straps at stake, and the public wasn't clamoring for the matchups.

The idea of Tua trading iron fists with Wladimir Klitschko is pretty intriguing. Could Tua rally to knock out Chris Byrd after being outslicked early and falling behind on the scorecards? Is Tua better than Kirk Johnson? Tua-Cliff Etienne would be fun, no? So would Tua-Lawrence Clay-Bey and Tua-Rahman II. And if Tyson's shot at Lewis fell through, and Tua-Tyson ever materialized, fans in attendance would have to be issued souvenir flak jackets.

Because of his style, power, and defensive limitations, it's difficult to imagine Tua in a bad fight—that is, until you remember that he just had a bummer of one at the Mandalay Bay 12 days before Thanksgiving. To drive the image of that night from our minds and to be considered something more than, as one columnist who knows very little about boxing described him, "the fat guy with bad hair," Tua has to show us that his failure to capture the big prize had more to do with the size of his rival's frame than the size of his own heart. The Samoan ought to drop about 15 pounds, come right back against a name opponent, and return his left hook to its rightful place: the point of someone's chin.

If Tua can do that, he'll assure that far more people will keep beating the drums for him than just those guys who herald his ring entrance. ■

NEW FACES

TOKUNBO OLAJIDE

Middleweight

By Joe Santoliquito

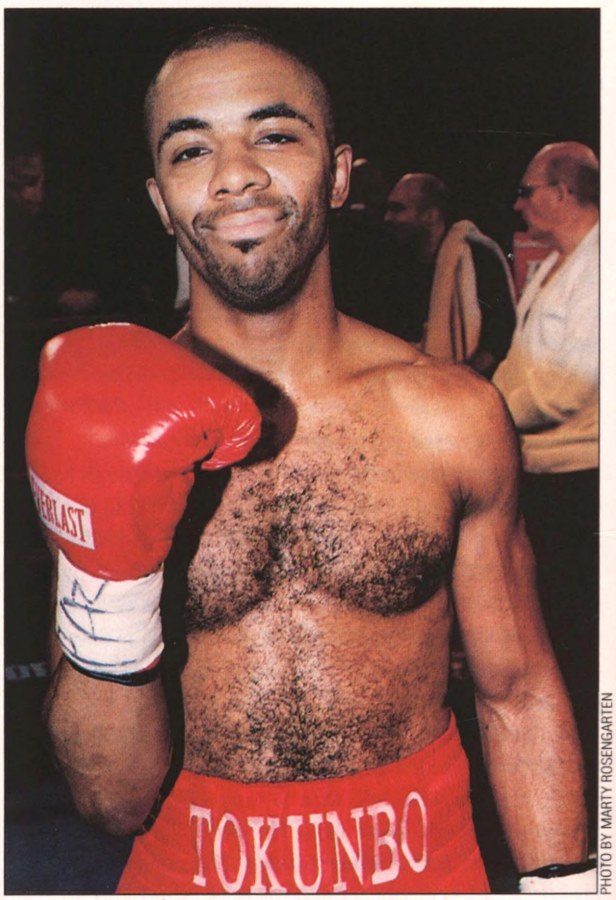


PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

His hero was his most elusive opponent. Tokunbo Olajide would slide boxing gloves over his tiny hands, then desperately try to hit his teenaged brother, Michael, who was kneeling before him. Michael would stir a reaction by laughing. Yet Tokunbo kept firing away at his sibling, only to fall prey to Michael's feints and grow increasingly frustrated.

By the time he was 11, Olajide was hitting men twice his age while teaching *them* the finer points of the Sweet Science. "Tokunbo kept his love for the sport," Michael said. "The great thing is he had an apprenticeship in boxing from the time he was four years old. You learn either through experience or you learn through following; Tokunbo learned through experience."

At 23, that experience is helping Olajide approach the realm of contender status. The 5'10" middleweight possesses good hand speed and good power. He's resourceful in the ring, but perhaps most of all, he's relentless not only in the pursuit of an opponent, but also in trying to scale the heights of boxing stardom.

Olajide, 10-0 (8), had a fine example of what boxing stardom looked like right next to him growing up. There is a 13-year gap between Tokunbo and his older brother Michael, a middleweight and super middleweight contender in the late-1980s and early-'90s. The stylish Michael lost his bid for the vacant IBF middleweight title against Frank Tate in '87 and went 12 grueling rounds with Thomas Hearns in '90 before retiring with a 27-5 (19) record in '91 after suffering three straight losses and a detached retina.

"Oh yeah, Michael was my hero. I followed him everywhere," Tokunbo recalled. "I have plenty of memories of my older brother fighting. I'd even be willing to admit I wanted the jerri-curl look he wore then. When I first came to New York from Richmond, Vancouver, Michael was on NBC all of the time, so people

(Continued on page 58)

PRO RECORD

1997		
June 20	Kelly Shaver, Atlantic City	KO 3
Aug. 24	Jim Navedo, Boston, MA	KO 1
1999		
Feb. 19	Lawrence Frisby, Port Chester, NY	W 4
June 3	Horatio Pitmon, Dickson City, PA	KO 2
July 30	Luis Rodriguez, Ledyard, CT	KO 2
Nov. 6	Predag Cvetanovic, Atlantic City	KO 1
2000		
Feb. 18	Carl Cockerman, Las Vegas	KO 5
July 14	Kevin Tillman, Hampton Beach, NH	W 4
Sept. 22	Bertrand Tchandjeu, Queens, NY	KO 6
Nov. 4	Brad Ekstam, New York City	KO 1

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DRAW	KOs
10	10	0	0	8

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Road Work . . . Bernard Hopkins (l) in stride while Livingstone Bramble (r) crosses finish line.

Go . . . Ken Norton officially starts race of celebrity boxers and runners.

INDUCTION CEREMONY

A Moment in Time . . . Joltin' Jeff Chandler (l) gives acceptance speech while Ken Buchanan (r) poses in Museum moments before Induction Ceremony.

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Marvelous . . . Marvin Hagler (l) autographs golf bag and Juan LaPorte (r) poses with golfers.

VIP COCKTAIL RECEPTION

Stars . . . Marvelous Marvin Hagler and Hector "Macho" Camacho pose for reception guests, while Carlos Ortiz (r) makes the rounds.

WORKOUT SESSIONS

Bernard Hopkins and Sugar Shane Mosley work out for the public on Museum Grounds.

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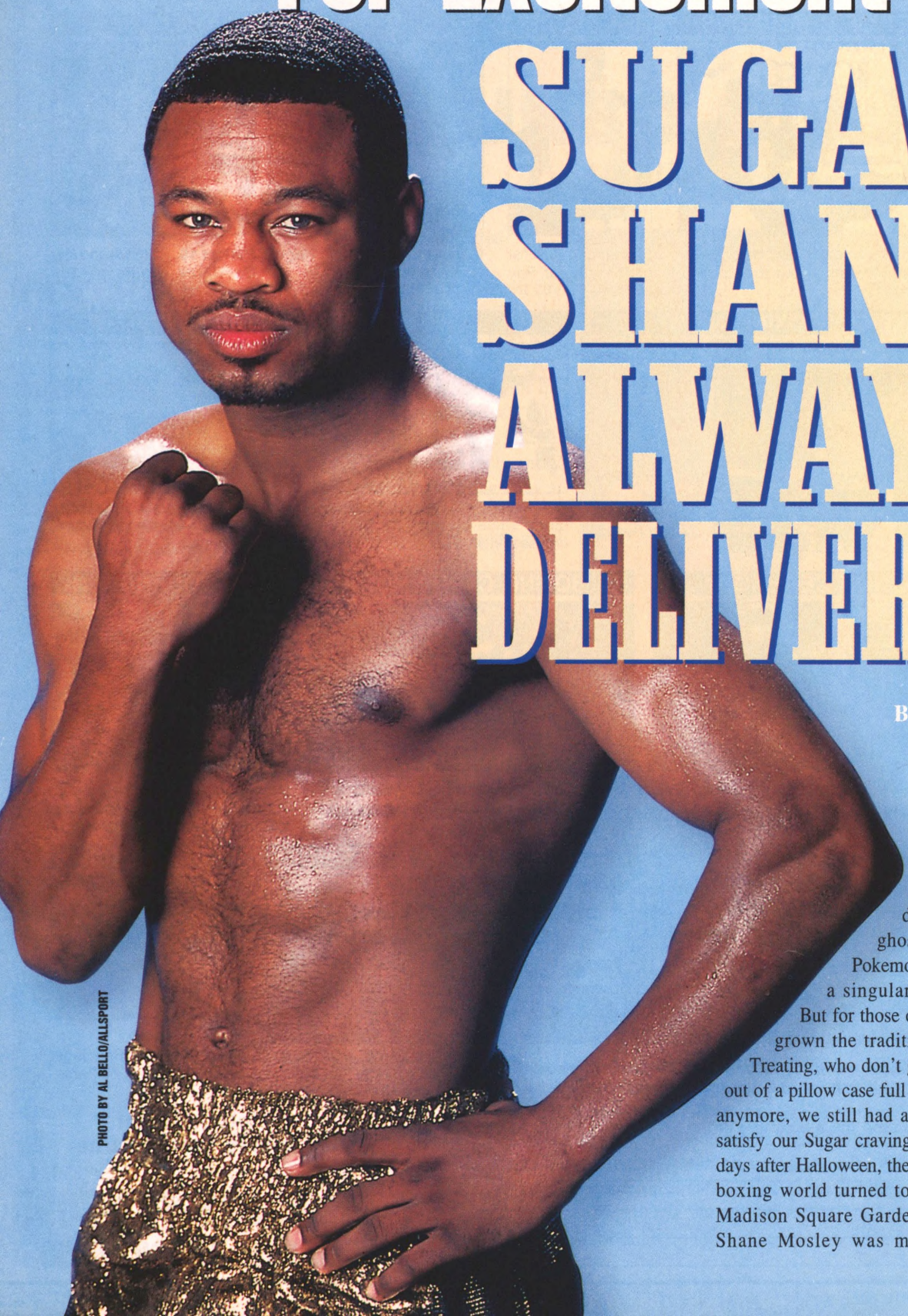


PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

By Eric Raskin

On October 31, children all across America were roaming the streets dressed up like ghosts, goblins, and Pokemon characters with a singular pursuit: sugar. But for those of us who've outgrown the tradition of Trick-Or-Treating, who don't get the same kick out of a pillow case full of chocolate bars anymore, we still had an opportunity to satisfy our Sugar craving that week. Four days after Halloween, the taste buds of the boxing world turned to The Theater at Madison Square Garden, where Sugar Shane Mosley was making his first

Mosley's right hand accounted for three knockdowns against Antonio Diaz, who had never been dropped in 35 previous fights. Sugar Shane's awesome performance against the credible Diaz certainly strengthened his claim to pound-for-pound supremacy.

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

defense of the welterweight title against Antonio Diaz. And as always, Mosley delivered something sweet.

With Roy Jones, Mosley's chief competitor for recognition as the best fighter in the world, nine times out of 10, a trick is all you get. Jones gives the fans a little tease early on, but once he feels he's shown how incredibly talented he is, if the opponent is still standing, then the light heavyweight champion decides to keep the rest of his gifts to himself and coast to victory. Sugar Shane's attitude is precisely the opposite. When you go to a Shane Mosley fight, you're guaranteed a treat, because, no matter how overmatched the opponent, he feels he has something to prove and he won't stop giving everything he has until the man in the other corner is completely beaten.

When referee Arthur Mercante Sr. waved his arms in the air at the 1:36 mark of round six, Diaz was completely beaten. He said his head was clear and he could have fought on, but he'd been down twice in the round, three times total in the fight, and there was just no way he was going to last more than another 30 seconds. He gave his all, which had been enough to beat 25 straight opponents coming into the fight, but against the best fighter in the world, Diaz was grossly overmatched. That such a tough, young, respected challenger was dispatched with such ease and efficiency only enhances Mosley's reputation as arguably the sport's finest talent and clearly the sport's most consistently brilliant performer.

Compare what Mosley did against Diaz to what Jones did against Eric Harding two months earlier. Though the styles of Diaz and Harding are completely opposite (the aggressive Diaz is custom-made for a slick boxer like Mosley, whereas counterpunching southpaw Harding is custom-made for nobody) the two challengers were on comparable pound-for-pound planes. And the passionless Jones didn't merely win boring like he often does; he genuinely struggled to beat Harding, uncharacteristically losing rounds, perhaps as many as four of them, before a biceps injury finally forced Harding's surrender after round 10. Maybe Jones, at nearly 32 years of age, is still as talented as Mosley. But he just doesn't put that talent to optimum use like Sugar Shane does.

After the Diaz fight, all parties involved heaped praise on the WBC welterweight champion.

"Sugar Shane is a great fighter. I think he really is the best pound-for-pound, most exciting fighter out there," said Diaz. "Shane has a lot of strengths. He has power, he has a lot of speed. Weaknesses, he doesn't have too many. The only thing

is that he gets tired a little too quick.

"Our plan was to follow him, throw punches, body and head, but for some reason, I couldn't just do it. I had to protect myself instead of going in and throwing punches. I've fought pretty fast fighters, but I've never fought a fighter as fast as Shane Mosley."

"I'm glad the referee stopped it," added Diaz' chief trainer, Lee Espinoza. "He's too fast. Sugar Ray Le—err, Sugar Shane Mosley's too fast, and I give all the credit to him."

Espinoza's slip can be excused. To confuse Mosley with the other great Sugars, Ray Leonard and Ray Robinson, is becoming easier and easier, and Leonard himself has told Mosley he thinks Sugar Shane's hands are slightly faster than his own ever were. Hall of Fame ref Mercante, who has now worked fights for all three Sugars, said afterward that Mosley is fully

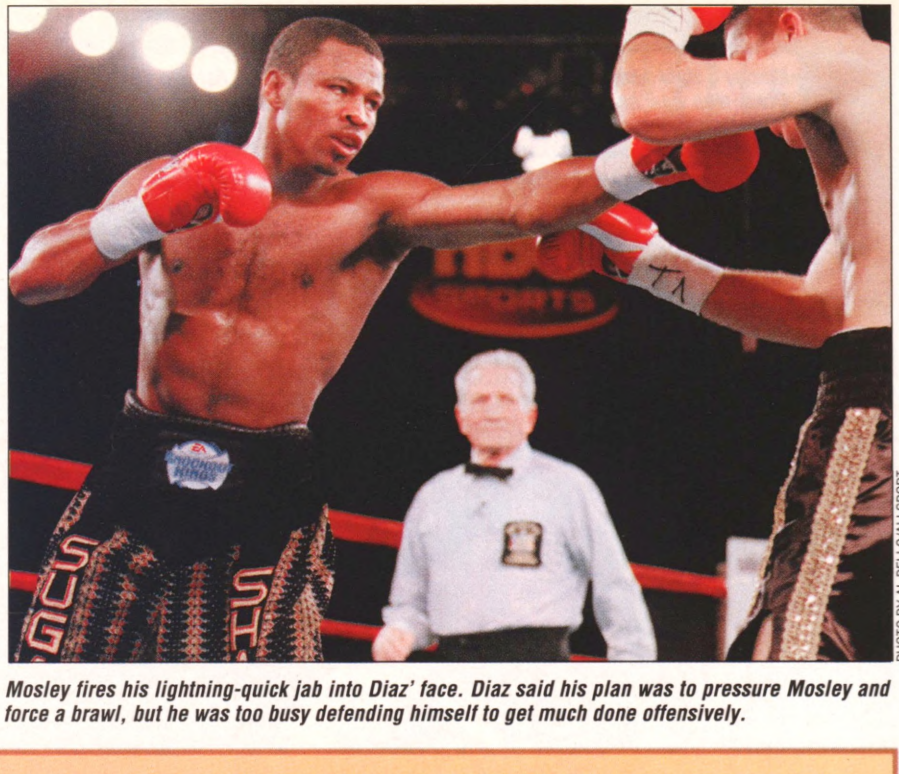


PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Mosley fires his lightning-quick jab into Diaz' face. Diaz said his plan was to pressure Mosley and force a brawl, but he was too busy defending himself to get much done offensively.

SETTING THE TONO FOR A SWEET REIGN

Fighting before a sellout crowd of 5,149 at The Theater at Madison Square Garden, a couple of California boys gave the New York fans their money's worth—or at least close to it following a dreadful four-hour undercard—in the main event. In a bout that was plenty exciting despite its one-sided nature, Shane Mosley, 146½, Pomona, California, dominated Antonio "Tono" Diaz, 146½, Coachella, California, to record his first defense of the WBC welterweight title.

The first round offered no surprises, with Diaz plowing forward as expected, walking directly into beautiful jabs, straight right hands, and solid right jabs when Mosley switched to southpaw. As Diaz tried to mount a body attack in round two, the champion nailed him flush on the jaw with a right hand that stunned the 24-year-old challenger. Diaz bent forward slightly, and Sugar Shane quickly followed up with a right that shoved Diaz to the canvas.

But Diaz bounced back with his best round in the third, initiating the action with a right to Mosley's chin. Mosley, 29, came back with a crackling right cross to Diaz' jaw, but the tough Mexican-American took it and kept steaming ahead with bodyshots. Mosley took over for good in the fourth, however, wobbling Diaz with a left hook and following up with an explosive flurry along the ropes. But Mosley, seemingly a bit less well-conditioned than in past fights, couldn't sustain the rally for long, and the game challenger made it out of the round.

Mosley hurt Diaz with two rights to the body in the fifth, then finished the job in the sixth. A beautiful right hand to the top of the head dropped Diaz to a knee early in the round, and this time he was clearly more hurt than when he went down in the second round.

"It was a punch that caught me behind the ear, and it was

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Diaz can't avoid Mosley's right hand

pretty hard," Diaz said. "I buckled a little bit, went down. I was okay, but that's the way it goes."

Diaz got up, and Mosley flurried furiously. Diaz tried to hold, but Sugar Shane wriggled free and soon landed a nifty southpaw right hook that put Diaz, 33-3 (22), on a knee again. Referee Arthur Mercante (USA) waved the fight over without a count at 1:36 of the round.

"After the first knockdown [of the sixth round], I tried to step it up a little bit," Mosley, 36-0 (33), said. "I threw a lot of combinations and I figured that I would stop him, but he willed it out, he kept throwing punches, and then I set him up with the nice right hook as a southpaw."

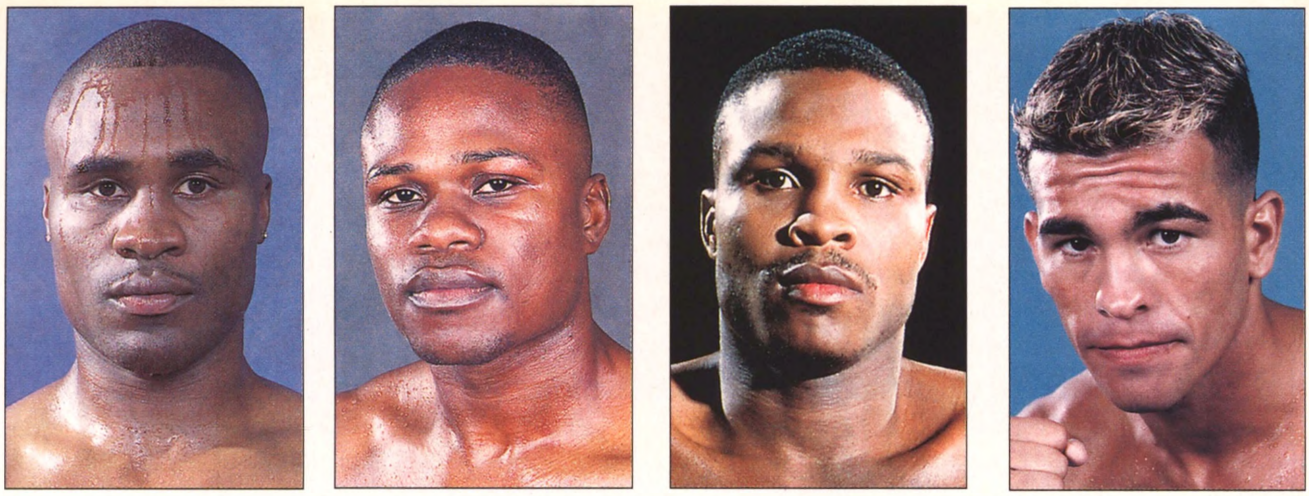
Mosley earned $3-million for the fight, to $350,000 for Diaz.

Television: HBO

Promoter: Cedric Kushner Promotions

(11-4-00)

—ER



Among the opponents whose names have been mentioned as potential challengers for Mosley are (from left) James Page, Vernon Forrest, Ike Quartey, and Arturo Gatti. But what everybody, including Mosley, really wants is a rematch with Oscar De La Hoya.

deserving of his nickname. And despite all the great fighters he'd seen over the years, Mercante seemed a bit staggered by the display he'd just witnessed.

"This guy is the Fighter of the Year right here," Mercante said. "And the reason I stopped the fight is because he's a tremendous banger and hitter, and this kid [Diaz] is a tremendous taker. I had to stop it."

It was back in June, after his spectacular decision win over Oscar De La Hoya, that THE RING decided to elevate Mosley to the top of the pound-for-pound list. This move was criticized in some corners as premature, and it's true that, other than "The Golden Boy," Mosley really hasn't faced any other "A"-level competition. But with the way he's crushed so many "B" opponents, combined with the De La Hoya win and Jones' increasingly withdrawn performances, he's finally winning over the masses. One top boxing writer whose mind was changed after the Diaz demolition is Dan Rafael of *USA Today*.

"I moved Mosley up to number two after he beat Oscar," Rafael said, "but I wanted to see him fight one more time, just in case the Oscar fight was some sort of aberration. And I didn't want to do it after the Jones-Harding fight either; I wanted to have Mosley moving up on one of his own fights, rather than base it on Jones looking bad. But it was an easy move now, with the combination of Roy looking like he didn't care against Harding, and Mosley looking so good vs. Oscar and vs. Diaz. I figured Mosley was going to beat Diaz convincingly, either by decision or maybe stop him on cuts, but I didn't expect such a legitimate stoppage and such an overwhelming performance."

Unfortunately, Mosley may be headed for more showcase performances against overwhelmed opponents in the near future, because there just aren't many tests out there for him. The only obvious superfight for Sugar Shane is a rematch with De La Hoya, who didn't lose their first fight by much and, with a new trainer, Floyd Mayweather Sr., in tow, has to be given a realistic chance of reversing the result in a second meeting. But The Golden Boy isn't available at the moment, as the Latino lilter has devoted the fall and winter months to exercising the pipes in his throat rather than the pipes connecting his shoulders to his fists. He's also in the midst of trying to break free from his contract with promoter Top Rank, so when he'll return to the ring, and when he'll be available to fight Mosley—if he in fact really wants to—is difficult to project.

Regardless, it's the fight everyone wants to see. Mosley's promoter, Cedric Kushner, said at the postfight press conference that the Mosley-Diaz fight should have been called "Moving On," because Sugar Shane wants to move forward and

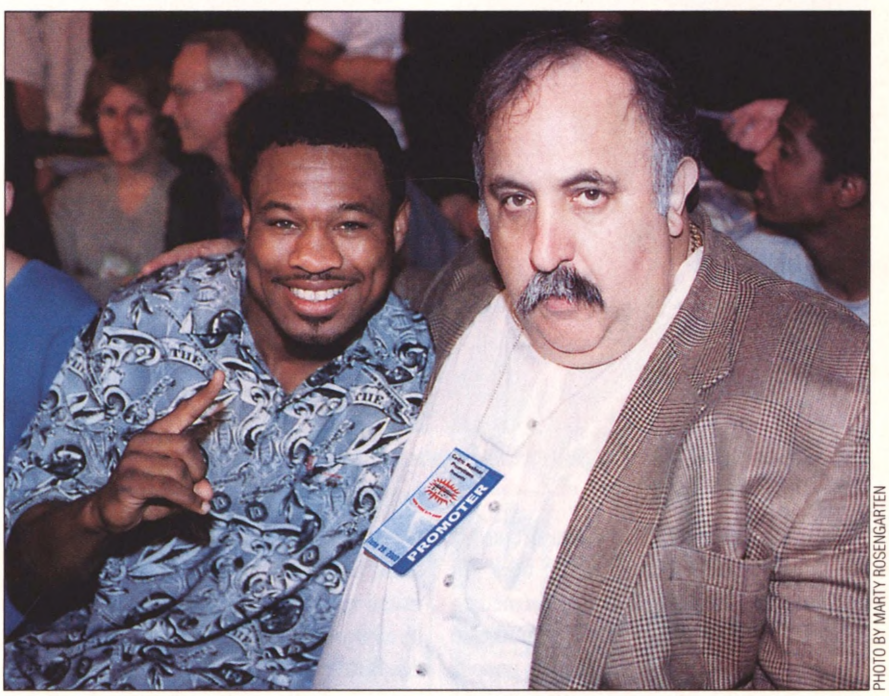


PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Cedric Kushner, Mosley's promoter, insists that Sugar Shane doesn't need De La Hoya and will be "moving on" with his career until further notice from "The Golden Boy." De La Hoya, meanwhile, is involved in a legal battle with his promoter, Bob Arum.

DEFENSIVE GENIUS

Mosley said after the Diaz fight, "I like being the hunted." Unlike some fighters who grow soft once they've captured a title, Mosley has no problem getting up for title defenses. While Sugar Shane had to go the distance to capture the IBF lightweight title from Philip Holiday and to take the WBC welter belt from Oscar De La Hoya, all nine of his title defenses have ended early. To further illustrate Mosley's dominance in defenses, we've compiled a chart that shows how few times his challengers had been kayoed previously, and how few rounds Mosley lost on all three scorecards combined in each defense.

OPPONENT	RESULT	TIMES KAYOED PREVIOUSLY	TOTAL ROUNDS MOSLEY LOST
Manuel Gomez	KO 11	4	3
Demetrio Ceballos	KO 8	0	0
John-John Molina	KO 8	1	2
Wilfrido Ruiz	KO 5	3	0
Eduardo Morales	KO 5	0	0
Jesse James Leija	KO 9	2	1
Golden Johnson	KO 7	1	0
John Brown	KO 8	0	5
Antonio Diaz	KO 6	0	0

Mosley hammers challenger John Brown

stay busy without De La Hoya dictating his future. But the press wouldn't back off on Oscar questions, and Mosley seemed to understand why and didn't really mind.

"I don't really get irritated by people asking about a rematch with Oscar," Mosley said. "They want to know if me and him are gonna fight again, because it was such a great fight. I give them the same answer: When Oscar's ready to step in the ring and fight again, if that's what he chooses to do, then that's what we'll do. But I already beat Oscar, so the ball's not in my court, it's in his court now to come back and try to win his title back. I've beaten De La Hoya, I won, so why would I be disappointed if I don't fight him again? I accomplished what I wanted to accomplish. The money is cool, but history is even better.

"Only Oscar knows if he's hungry or not. Like they always say, if you're not motivated to fight anymore, then don't fight, because if you get into the ring and you're not really hungry, and you don't want it, then you can get yourself hurt. So if he's not really motivated, and I'm motivated, he's gonna get himself hurt."

So the question becomes, who else is out there for Mosley to hurt in the meantime? As of press time, both the IBF and WBA welterweight titles were vacant, so there are no unification options. But the man likely to ascend to the IBF throne is Vernon Forrest, whose first shot at the vacant title against Raul Frank ended in a headbutt-induced no-contest, with a rematch in the works for early-2001. There's a built-in storyline for Mosley-Forrest, since the undefeated "Viper" defeated Sugar Shane at the '92 U.S. Olympic Box-offs, squashing Mosley's potential to turn pro with superstar status, and ultimately slowing his ascension toward a world title. Forrest is a good fighter who deserves a crack. The flip side is that he's totally anonymous to the general public, and the hardcore fans have seen enough of him to know he's not on Mosley's level.

Then there's James Page, the former WBA champion who was stripped of the belt this past fall for inactivity. Page's punch makes him a bit more of a threat than Forrest, but still, the way he struggled in title defenses against Sam Garr and Fred Pendleton, combined with the fact that he hasn't fought since July '99, make him a real longshot to trouble Mosley.

Perhaps the most intriguing possibility is former champion Ike Quartey. But when HBO made a proposal in mid-November for the rugged African to fight Mosley at the Garden on February 24, Quartey declined the opportunity, saying he didn't have enough time to prepare. Well, if three months doesn't give him enough time, it's reasonable to assume no amount of time will be enough. That's a shame, because certainly Quartey hits hard enough and has the world-class experience to threaten Mosley. But he's also rivaling the Tin Man for rust acquired, and like everybody else,

PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

Jack Mosley, Shane's father and trainer, holds the pads for the WBC welterweight champ. It's hard to imagine Sugar Shane's motivation or work ethic ever being questioned.

would struggle mightily to cope with Sugar Shane's speed.

There are other potential opponents who could prove intriguing, but the timing and the weights aren't right. Zab Judah and Kostya Tszyu, two of the champions at 140 pounds, both figure to pose more problems than Diaz did. But they're on course to face each other sometime in the summer of 2001, meaning a move up to welter for the winner is at least a year away. Up at 154 pounds—a weight Mosley would rather not go to for at least a couple more fights—a fight with Felix Trinidad would certainly make for a blockbuster. Unfortunately, on the heels of his spectacular win over Fernando Vargas, "Tito" plans to move immediately to 160 pounds, and by the time Mosley's a junior middle, Trinidad may be a super middle. As for Vargas, if he's able to come back strong, a showdown with Mosley could be huge, but it probably wouldn't happen until sometime in 2002.

Then there's the opponent HBO originally had in mind for Mosley's February 24 date: Arturo Gatti. This is a mismatch that most members of the media are vehemently opposed to. (Rafael said, "If Diaz was out in six, Gatti's out in two, bleeding before he gets in the ring.") It's a case of perhaps the two most exciting fighters in the world coming together to make a whole that doesn't come close to equalling the sum of the parts. Fortunately, the fight is now off the table, as Gatti's handlers seem to recognize that he'd be in over his head with Mosley. Their minds also may have been changed by the fact that an even more lucrative fight with De La Hoya has been offered to the thrill-a-minute drama king.

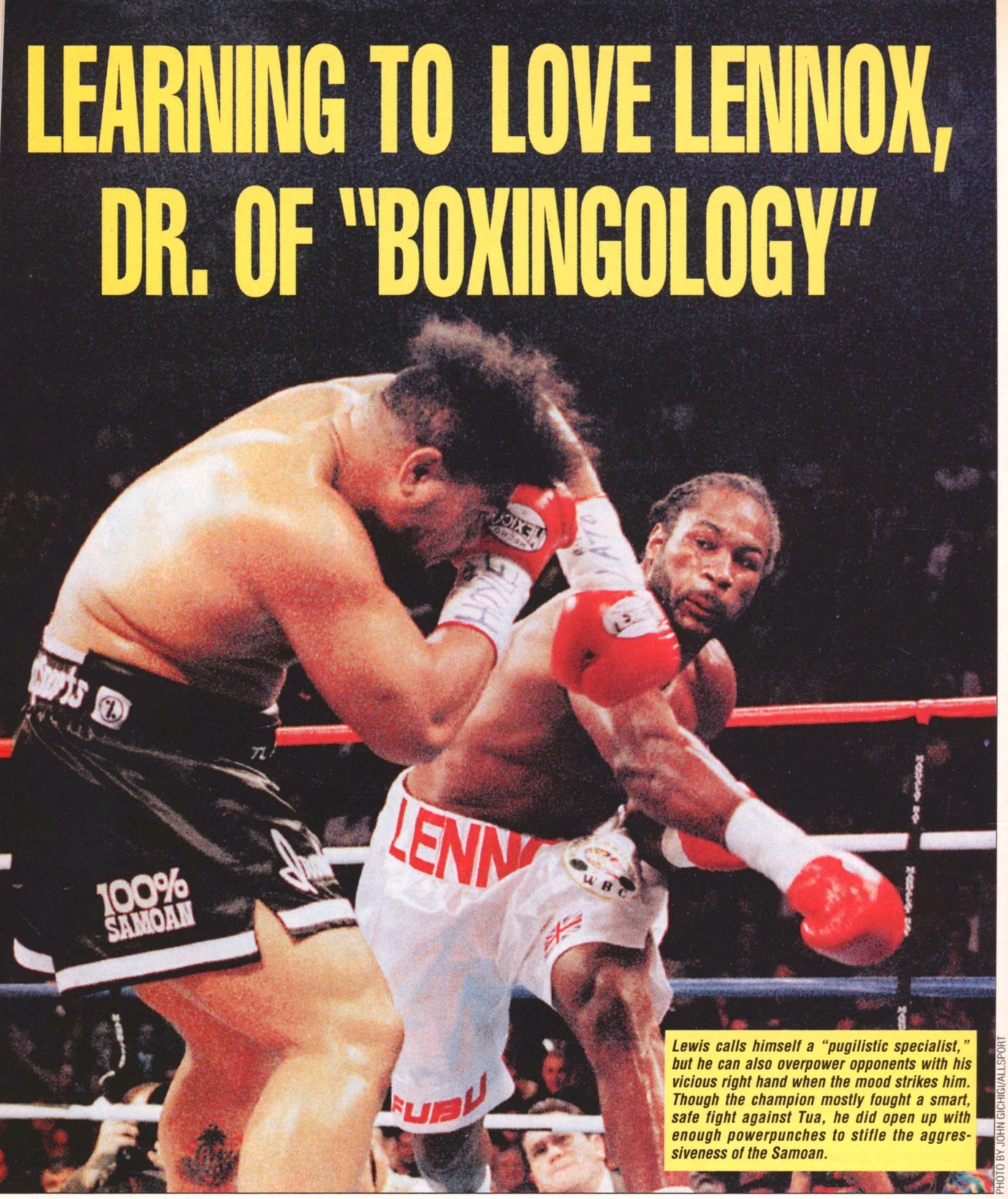
Sadly, a Gatti fight could have done big business at the Garden, certainly bigger than guys like Shannon Taylor or Oba Carr, whose names entered the mix after Gatti dropped out. The Canadian-born Gatti is based out of Jersey City, New Jersey, and he has a strong following in New York. So does Mosley, who has never gotten the coverage he's deserved from the media back home in Los Angeles, but is very popular with the East Coast press and, when he took on Diaz, became the first fighter ever to sell out The Theater in more than five years.

So maybe, from a business perspective, Mosley-Gatti would have made sense. But, ironically, from a boxing perspective, only if Mosley started acting like Roy Jones does a Gatti fight last beyond a couple of rounds and give the fans anything close to their money's worth. And that's not about to happen. Mosley doesn't have any Roy Jones in him. He is a totally motivated fighter, and when a member of the press asked him after the Diaz fight what his goals are now that he's on top of the mountain, his answer was nothing short of perfect:

"I'd like to continue to look impressive in all my fights, win as many fights as I can until I can't do it anymore, and then once I can't do it anymore, I'll leave it to somebody else, the younger generation, whoever is better than me, and I'll say farewell."

What a treat. ■

LEARNING TO LOVE LENNOX, DR. OF "BOXINGOLOGY"



Lewis calls himself a "pugilistic specialist," but he can also overpower opponents with his vicious right hand when the mood strikes him. Though the champion mostly fought a smart, safe fight against Tua, he did open up with enough powerpunches to stifle the aggressiveness of the Samoan.

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/ALLSPORT

By Nigel Collins

Everybody knows that many great artists are never appreciated in their lifetime. Vincent Van Gogh didn't sell a painting until he was six feet underground, and when Herman Melville published *Moby Dick* in 1851, it was both a critical and commercial flop. In their own way, the best fighters are also artists, and among today's heavyweights, Lennox Lewis has unquestionably earned the right to call himself the best.

Lewis isn't on Melville and Van Gogh's level, of course, but his accomplishments—Olympic gold, two reigns as WBC heavyweight champion, unification of the three major belts, a 38-1-1 (29) record—have given him an impressive portfolio in a discipline just as demanding as whaling and ear-slashing. He's made far more money than the American novelist and the Dutch painter ever dreamed possible, but like them, Britain's self-described

In some of the early rounds, Lewis used a tentative, pawing jab to keep the challenger at bay (above), but from the fourth round on, the Briton threw his lead left with authority (bottom).

"pugilistic specialist" has never been fully appreciated during his prime.

Prize fighting is such a visceral enterprise, boxers who use their heads for something other than catching punches are seldom beloved, and the chess-playing Lewis is undoubtedly a thinking fighter. Like Melville, Van Gogh, and countless other misunderstood artists, he's felt the sting of rejection, but at least they suffered in private. During his most recent public performance, Lewis was forced to listen to the restless boos of the 12,000-plus in attendance as he meticulously went about the task of unmasking David Tua.

"People who are disappointed when they don't see a knockout are missing the art of boxing," Lewis told ESPN's Gary Miller when he was a guest on *Up Close* a few days after the Tua fight. "It's an art form for me, the Sweet Science, hitting without being hit."

This is nothing new. Lewis had said it all countless times before. Some people just get caught up in wishing he was something he isn't. Why anyone, especially Tua, believed that Lewis would slug it out toe-to-toe is hard to comprehend. The Englishman has always played it safe against dangerous opponents, but Lewis' ability to adapt his style to suit his opposition has been a mixed blessing. Although his versatility has unquestionably made him a much more effective fighter, it has not endeared him to the masses. Lewis' seemingly aloof personality hasn't helped either, even though he's actually more sensitive than standoffish.

Nevertheless, did you notice how quickly everybody started to warm up to him after he bombed out Michael Grant and Frans Botha in less than two rounds apiece? With boxing fans, knockouts have a way of overriding all other considerations. But Lewis will never be a pure knockout artist like Mike Tyson or Earnie Shavers; he's too resourceful to limit himself to just a single avenue of success.

"I'm a big man. That's the way I box," said Lewis. "I'm not going to slug it out with a little guy and give away my advantage."

While discerning members of the media praised Lewis for his technically perfect performance against Tua, you can't expect technique to sell anywhere near as well as unadulterated mayhem, and it's unrealistic to think fans will happily hand over their money to watch Lewis conduct a boxing clinic. But that's exactly what he did against Tua, who had fooled a lot of folks into thinking he was a Samoan ver-

PHOTOS BY HOLLY STEIN/HBO

PHOTO BY JEFF GROSS/ALLSPORT

Lewis shows off his defensive skill, making Tua miss by about a foot with this left hook. When the stocky Samoan did get close to Lewis, the resourceful champion used an unconventional but very effective up-and-over clinching technique to tie him up.

sion of Joe Frazier. But that was before the fight started.

What makes the situation even more exasperating for those who yearn to have a dominant destroyer atop the heavyweight division is that the 35-year-old Lewis is fighting better now than ever and actually seems to be enjoying himself. Did you notice him experimenting with a reggae version of the Ali shuffle in the late rounds of the Tua tussle? Moreover, there doesn't seem to be anyone around good enough to beat him in the foreseeable future, and that includes Tyson.

Love him or hate him, we'd best get used to having the laid-back Englishman sitting on the heavyweight throne for a while longer yet. Perhaps it would be wiser if we tried to enjoy Lewis for what he is, rather than denigrate him for what he isn't. If you want to look on the positive side, the Tua fight is as good a place to start as any.

Going in, nobody complained about his choice of challengers. Both the fans and Lewis knew what he was up against, and despite prefight talk by Emanuel Steward that "Lennox is willing to stand toe-to-toe," only the most gullible believed it. Tua's left hook is for real, and only an idiot—or a madman like Ike Ibeabuchi—would consider swapping haymakers with him. Lewis, his potent right hand notwithstanding, considers himself a boxer, not a fighter, and has coined the word "boxingology" to describe what he does inside the ring. But you don't need a Ph.D. in Pugilism to know that the way to beat Tua is to stay away from the hook and jab the bejesus out of him.

The fight was pretty much a stinker, but

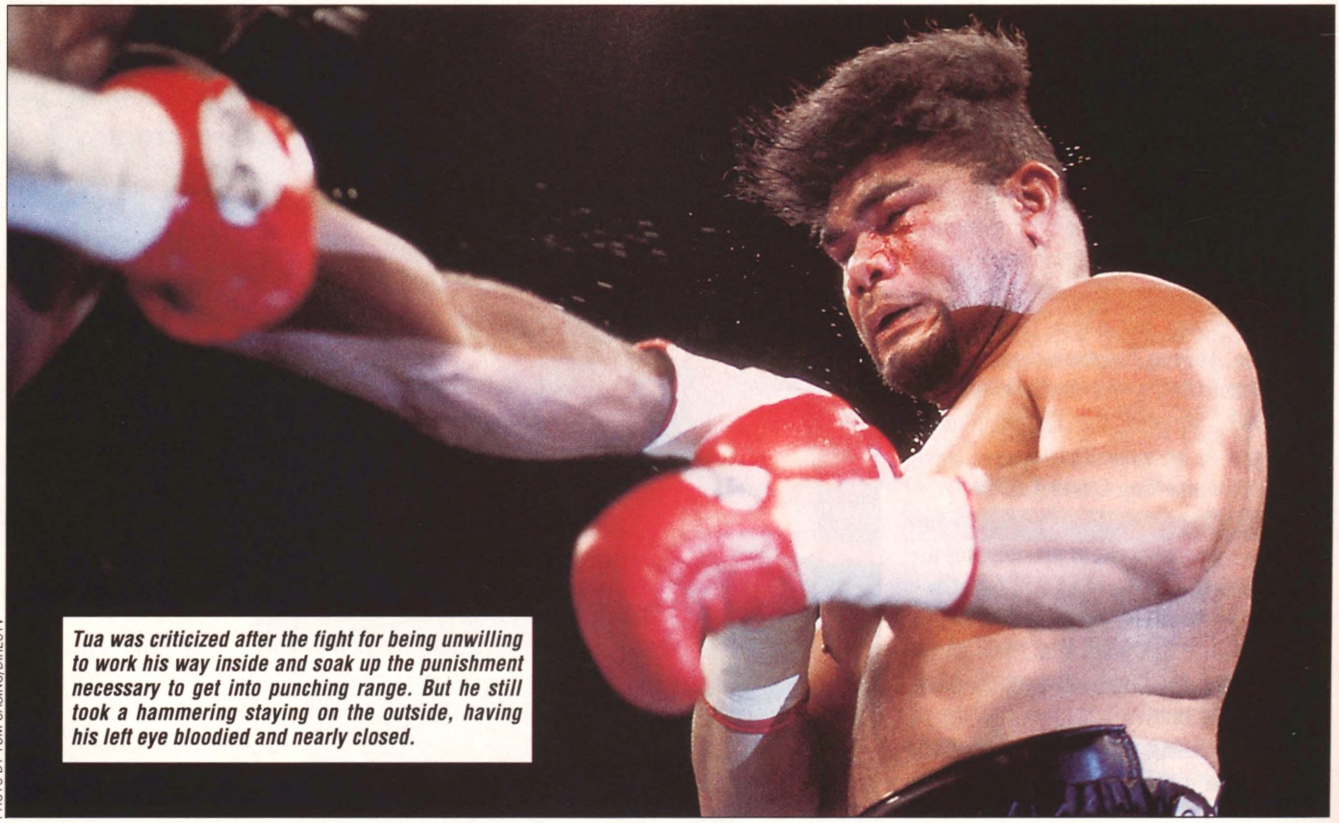


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/DIRECTV

Tua was criticized after the fight for being unwilling to work his way inside and soak up the punishment necessary to get into punching range. But he still took a hammering staying on the outside, having his left eye bloodied and nearly closed.

it wasn't all Lewis' fault. To a large degree, Tua punked out. When you're a 5'10" slugger going up against a 6'5" boxer with a 15-inch reach advantage, you'd better be prepared to take two or three shots, maybe four or five, in order to get close enough to inflict some damage of your own. But it became clear as the bout progressed that Tua didn't have an appetite for such punishing tactics, preferring instead to leap in with an occasional hook, hoping against hope that it might somehow find its way to Lewis' chin.

Prognosticators such as Teddy Atlas and Eddie Futch, who predicted Lewis' demise, overrated Tua's desire to win at all costs and underrated Lewis' steely discipline. For all his prefight promises of "fulfilling my destiny" and "laying it all on the line," Tua ended up like a puppy on a leash, following Lewis around the ring and eating jabs. Even though trainer Ronnie Shields told him he was behind and repeatedly begged him to "pick it up," at no time during the bout did Tua go for broke in an all-out attempt to accomplish his mission. Lewis thinks he knows the reason why.

"If he had opened up more, it would have been easier for me to knock him out," said the champion, happy to state the obvious. "Then in the later rounds, I think he was just too tired."

Maybe it's this maddeningly rational way of thinking that has alienated so many fans, fans who have grown used to rooting for zealots like Evander Holyfield and emotionally disturbed misfits like Tyson. Nowadays, it seems that nobody wants to cheer for the normal guy (whatever that means). But if we rise above our most primordial passions for a moment, there's a lot to like about Lewis: He's a gentleman who refuses to indulge in trash talk. He's never been arrested or associated with any

TUA COMES UP SHORT

David Tua entered Las Vegas' Mandalay Bay Event Center amid a din of conch shells blowing, drums pounding, and Samoans chanting. It was some scene, even by boxing's increasingly showbiz standards, and the sellout crowd of 12,085 ate it up. Unfortunately for Tua and hundreds of his supporters who flew in from New Zealand and Samoa, it was all downhill after his ring walk.

Lewis, 249, looked a bit like a skittish racehorse at first, almost falling over himself a few times in a scrambling effort to stay away from Tua's lethal left hook. One whizzed past his nose in the first and another grazed his whiskers in the second, but Lewis was pulled away and wasn't hurt. Tua, meantime, had tasted the champion's jab and felt the power in the trio of right hands that found his head in the second.

Lewis pounds Tua into the ropes

Tua, 245, had his best round in the third, landing a hook that prompted Lewis to do one of those exaggerated wobbles fighters do when they've been buzzed but don't want the other guy to know it. Tua fell for the timeworn ruse and hesitated, and the moment passed.

Lewis began working his jab from the start. He varied its intensity from tickle to neck-snapping. *Bip ... Bip ... BAAM!* Eventually, he mesmerized Tua with it, landing a mind-numbing (in more ways than one) 213 jabs over the course of 12 rounds. But the jab wasn't the whole story. Lewis wisely alternated the direction of his lateral movement, clearly confident that his 35-year-old legs had enough bounce to carry him for 12 tension-filled rounds. He also came up with a strange clinching method, where he reached up and over when Tua got too close for comfort, enveloping his foe with his upper body and massive arms. And we can't forget the right, which Lewis held cocked and ready, a threat to strike at any time.

Lewis took it to another level in the fourth, jabbing with authority, moving smoothly, and hooking well to the head and body. It was a real seminar, and the fight soon turned into what old-timers loved to call a "paint job," where the only punch Lewis needed to control the fight was the jab. Even so, he still dropped in enough right hands to remind Tua what was in store if he got too reckless.

The boos started in the eighth and kept up intermittently until the final bell. In the ninth, it looked as if Lewis might possibly placate the crowd with a knockout when he landed a painful-looking combination to Tua's swollen and discolored face. He hurt Tua again early in the 10th, but when he caught a hook in return, the champion went back to boxing for the remainder of the match and romped home an easy winner by unanimous scores of 117-111 (Jerry Roth), 119-109 (Dave Moretti), and 118-110 (Chuck Giampa).

"All I had to worry about was his left hook," said Lewis. "But when you go to war, you have to bring your whole arsenal, not just a left hook and a haircut."

"I'm not going to make any excuses," said Tua, whose record fell to 37-2 (32). "I did the best I could. Lennox is a great champion, and I just kept trying."

The referee was Joe Cortez (USA).

Promoters: Main Events, Panix Promotions, America Presents, Lion Promotions

(11-11-00)

—NC

sort of scandal. He gives quietly to charity and takes his mum to all his fights. What's not to like?

Best of all from a boxing point of view, Lewis never ducks anybody. The only name heavyweights he hasn't beaten since turning pro in 1986 are the ones who've ducked *him*—Tyson and Riddick Bowe. Sure, Tyson wants to fight him now, or at least says he does. But let's not forget all that step-aside money Mr. Mike forked over to avoid the big Brit back in the mid-1990s, when Tyson was taking titles from pathetic Frank Bruno and Bruce Seldon.

There have been outstanding heavyweight champions prior to Lewis who were never fully appreciated during their time at the top. Gene Tunney, Ezzard Charles, and Larry Holmes come to mind. Although other factors were involved in their relative lack of popularity, like Lewis, they were thinking fighters, not sluggers. But also like Tunney, Charles, and Holmes, Lewis has the heart and resiliency to rumble when given no other choice. His brawls with Ray Mercer and Shannon Briggs proved that.

Today, Tunney and Charles are in the Hall of Fame, and Holmes will be too, when he finally hangs up his gloves long enough to meet the retirement requirement. The guess here is that Lewis will also be appreciated far more by posterity than he is by the paying public. Even so, according to HBO Sports/TVKO Senior Vice President Mark Taffet, the Lewis-Tua pay-per-view did 420,000 buys (120,000 from satellite homes and 300,000 from cable systems) at $44.95 a pop, which means that it wasn't exactly a financial disaster.

If HBO/TVKO, which owns the rights to televise Lewis' fights, and Showtime/SET, which has the same prerogative with Tyson, can't come to an agreement in the near future, Lewis isn't going to wait around. Kirk Johnson, Wladimir Klitschko, and Hasim Rahman have all been mentioned as possible opponents. You won't find Tyson taking on anybody as formidable while the networks work out an agreement, that's for sure. And that's another thing you have to like about Lewis: Even his marking-time bouts are respectable matches, with nary a Julius Francis or Lou Savarese in sight.

There's also something refreshing about Lewis' attitude toward his chosen profession. He genuinely considers it a sport and acts accordingly! It's a pity the British have never taken to him with the enthusiasm he deserves, because despite his Jamaican heritage, his teenage years in Canada, and a training camp in Pennsylvania, Lewis is very British in his outlook. But not only that. He also fights in the traditional stand-up English style, classic left jab and all. He should be just the Brits' cup of tea, but isn't. Somehow, the fit's not quite right.

Lewis likes to call himself a "citizen of the Planet," which is a righteous notion, but as a fighter, it leaves him with an ambiguous fan base. He might wear dreadlocks, but he's not Bob Marley preaching universal brotherhood. He's the heavyweight champion of the world, kicking ass among a species not yet ready to give up its chauvinistic tendencies.

Lewis is caught in the same bind that confounds much of today's culture. We've become so jaded, displays of athletic prowess are no longer enough to satisfy our need for vicarious thrills. We need an extreme edge to give us the rush we crave, and a master craftsman like Lewis with a very private lifestyle is at a major disadvantage. But stop for a moment and imagine what the heavyweight landscape would look like without him ...

Not a pretty picture, is it? You can't hang a boxer on the wall in a museum or put him on a bookshelf in a library. You have to experience him in the here-and-now in order to fully savor his mastery. It's time to start enjoying Lewis while we can. ■

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/ALLSPORT

Lewis shows off his belts after the fight. Like Gene Tunney, Ezzard Charles, and Larry Holmes before him, Lewis seems destined not to be fully appreciated as a great heavyweight until his career is over.

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A New Beginning ... A New Middle

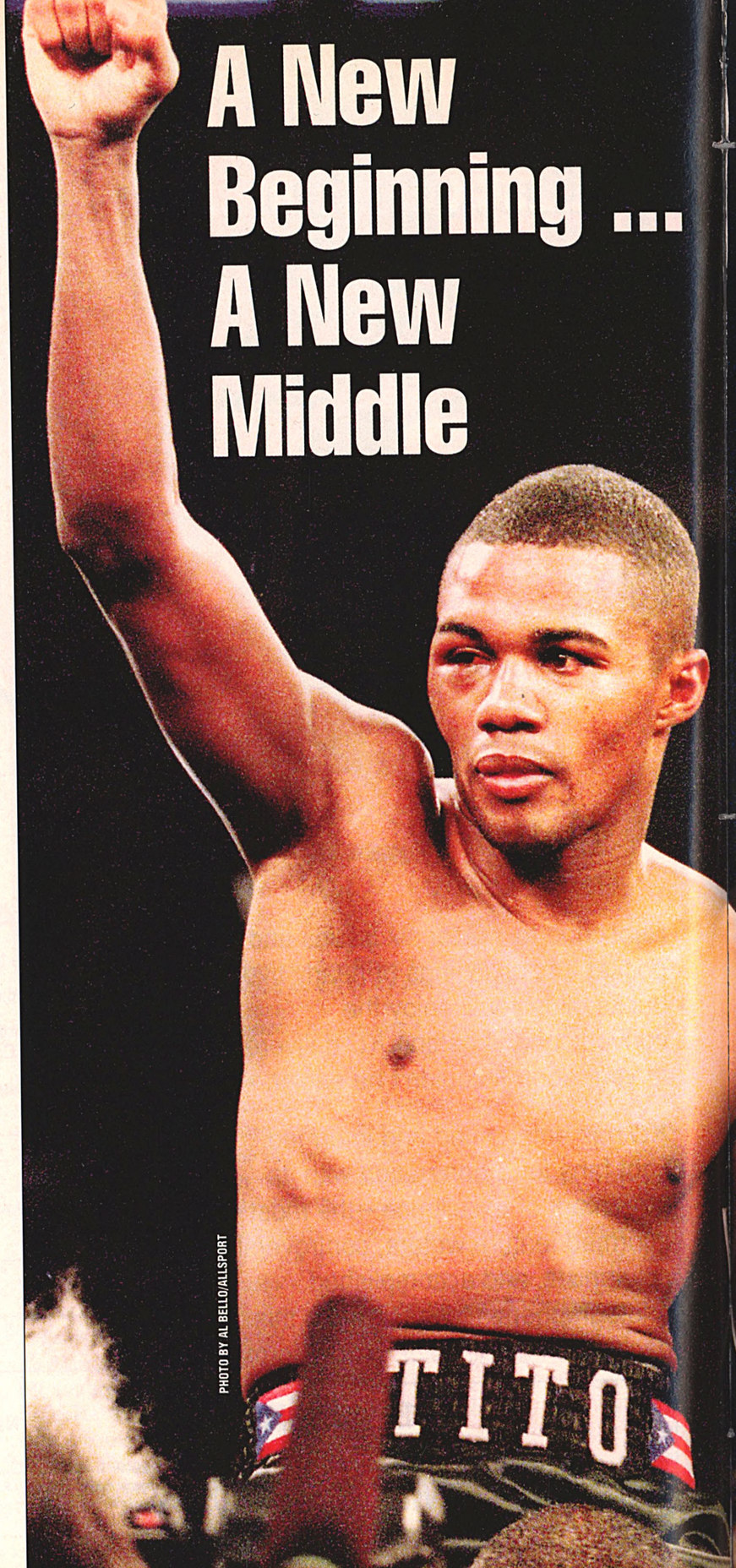


PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

FELIX TRINIDAD PREPARES TO CONQUER ANOTHER DIVISION!

By Eric Raskin

Everything goes in cycles. Disco came, and went, and came again. The synthesizer-driven pop music of the '80s, which we all laughed at throughout the '90s, is somehow now being embraced by nostalgic Gen-Xers. In another 10 years, grunge rock will be back and we'll be digging our old flannel shirts out of our closets.

Boxing is no different. Throughout history, the middleweight division has generally been one of the sport's most glamorous, but there have been lean periods mixed in there, valleys to accompany the peaks in the cycle. The peaks are obvious: the Harry Greb-Mickey Walker-Tiger Flowers era in the '20s; the Tony Zale-Rocky Graziano-Jake LaMotta era in the '40s that led right into the Ray Robinson-Gene Fullmer-Carmen Basilio era in the '50s; the Marvin Hagler-Tommy Hearns-Ray Leonard era in the '80s. The valleys in between are generally forgotten with time, but while we're stuck in them, we're aware of it and we moan about it. And for the last half-decade, those longing for the days when middleweight was a glorious word have had plenty of reason to moan.

That's not to say that there haven't been any good fighters at 160 pounds since Roy Jones departed the division in 1994. It's just there haven't been any particularly meaningful fights, and there haven't been any superstars around to draw attention to the weight class. But that's all about to change. Felix "Tito" Trinidad is coming, and he's bringing with him a return to glory for the middleweight division.

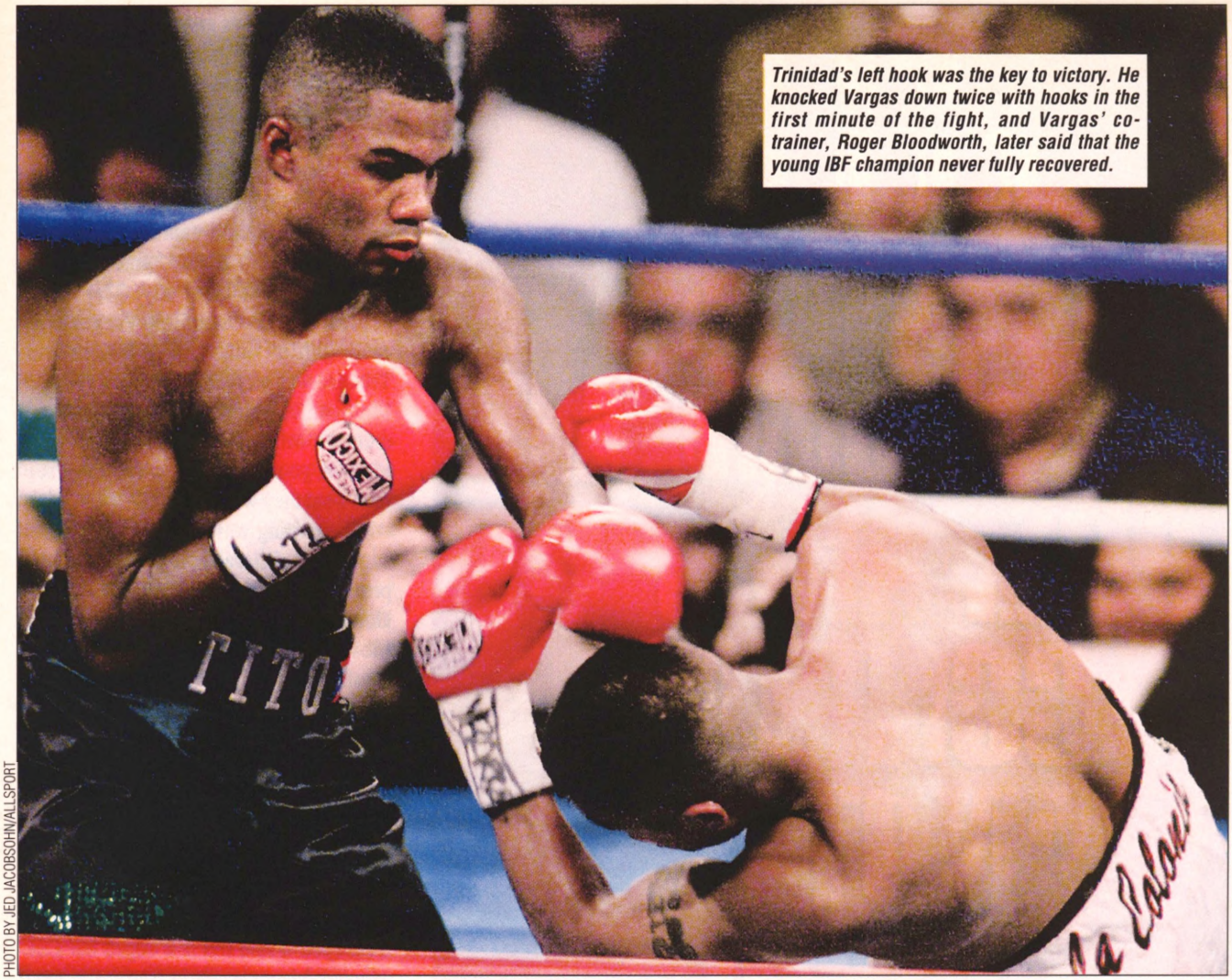
On the heels of his spectacular 12th-round knockout victory over Fernando Vargas in Las Vegas on December 2, Trinidad is hotter than ever. He stands now as the greatest Puerto Rican fighter in history and, for the first time in his 10-year career, legitimate arguments can be made that he is the best fighter in the world, pound-for-pound. And he's exciting. Not quite Arturo Gatti exciting, but not that far off either. He goes down, he gets up, and he ultimately destroys supposedly immovable objects, clashing with the best fighters in the world and removing the word "undefeated" from their introductions. Forget about the aberration against Oscar De La Hoya; Trinidad is a warrior who makes great fights. He's just what the ringside physician ordered for the lumped-up middleweight division.

If you don't believe he can single-handedly cure the 160-pound class, just look at what he did for the 154-pounders in his brief time there: two pay-per-view mega-fights in nine months, two world titles, a 3-0 (2) record, and—bottom line—he ducked nobody. The bold, explosive IBF champion Vargas was calling him out, and WBA champ Trinidad was more than happy to give the Mexican-American firebrand, not to mention millions of boxing fans who know a good matchup when they see one, what they wanted.

The writing was on the walls for this superfight. Literally. The walls of the press room at the Mandalay Bay Casino-Hotel were plastered with five-foot-high blowups of media quotes hailing Trinidad-Vargas as the Fight of the Year, a can't-miss collision between cold-blooded assassins with perfect records. This was a pay-per-view sold, simply, on the quality of the fight, not on the potential for chaos or on anybody's hairstyle. This was that rare super-hyped superfight that actually lived up to expectations, and whether or not it was in fact the Fight of Year (you'll find out if it edged out Erik Morales-Marco Antonio Barrera in next month's special year-end issue of THE RING EXTRA), it was everything boxing fans could have hoped for.

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

The Trinidad-Vargas fight appeared too close to call going in, but Tito turned out to have slight edges in speed, power, and guile, and he gradually wore "Ferocious Fernando" down over the course of an unforgettable war.



Trinidad's left hook was the key to victory. He knocked Vargas down twice with hooks in the first minute of the fight, and Vargas' co-trainer, Roger Bloodworth, later said that the young IBF champion never fully recovered.

PHOTO BY JED JACOBSOHN/ALLSPORT

Vargas, who becomes a little bit more Mexican and a little bit less American with each fight, entered the ring wearing a green, white, and red robe, a red headband just like his idol, Julio Cesar Chavez, always wore, and his trademark scowl. Trinidad followed, smiling wide despite the fact that his Puerto Rican fans were being drowned out by the mostly pro-Vargas crowd of 10,627 at the Mandalay Bay Events Center. They were so loud, in fact, that Jimmy Lennon Jr. was barely audible as he introduced Vargas. They remained boisterous as the opening bell rang. Then, suddenly, the only sound they could make was a collective gasp.

Twenty seconds into the fight, a blazing Trinidad hook that Vargas never saw collided with the IBF champion's jaw, and just like that, he was hurt worse than he'd ever been before. "El Feroz" staggered, was grazed by a few followup shots, and, unable to find his balance, stumbled down on his rear. He bounced up barely two seconds into referee Jay Nady's count and, his eyes locked on Trinidad, waded back into battle. Vargas made a point before the fight of insisting his Aztec warrior blood would not allow him to run, and as Tito charged at him, Vargas tried to catch him coming in. But Trinidad was much quicker, and another hook found the tip of Vargas' chin, putting him down again. Forty seconds into the fight, Vargas had been down twice, and Trinidad was standing on the middle ropes, sure that he had the fight won.

But Vargas got up. And he slowly found his legs, circling and throwing jabs until the bell rang. He had escaped the embarrassment of a first-round knockout, but if anyone thought he really had his bearings back after the disastrous first three minutes had ended, they surely reconsidered when they saw Vargas head to a neutral corner at the bell, staying there for a few seconds before realizing that his trainers and his stool were some 20 feet away.

"I just walked to where I thought the corner was at," Vargas later joked.

Vargas, 154, was still shaky in the second, and Trinidad, 154, made him look slow at every turn. A stiff jab staggered Vargas, and again the crowd gasped, fearing that this supposed Fight of the Year was about to be over. But again Vargas survived, and in the third he began to look like the talented fighter who had won his first 20 fights, 18 by knockout. Vargas started landing with straight right hands, and when Trinidad showed his first sign of weakness—pawing at his right eye after an accidental thumbing from Vargas—the 22-year-old pounced. He unloaded left hook after left hook while his right arm was locked in a half-clinch. The only way Trinidad could break his momentum was with a left that landed squarely on Vargas' cup, leaving the Californian in obvious pain. Vargas took about a two-minute break, and Trinidad received a stern warning from Nady.

PHOTO BY JED JACOBSOHN/ALLSPORT

Vargas willed his way back into the fight after his disastrous start, landing quite a few straight right hands in the middle rounds. Amazingly, Vargas made up the early deficit and, with the help of a fourth-round knockdown, was actually leading on one official scorecard after the fifth round.

Early in the fourth, Trinidad loaded up for a left to the body, but Vargas landed first with a perfectly placed hook to the jaw, dropping Trinidad hard. This was nothing new for Tito, who had been dropped five times previously in title bouts, and he knew just how to get out of trouble. In a brilliant veteran move, the Puerto Rican landed another left below the belt as Vargas was trying to finish him. This time, Tito lost a point, but it was more than worth it for the time it bought him.

With Trinidad bleeding from a small cut over the right eye, Vargas dominated the fifth, seeming to take over the fight with sharp jabs, uppercuts, and bodyshots. But the momentum turned again in the sixth, when Vargas leaned directly into a short right hand and had to hold. From that point on, Trinidad—as he somehow always does—grew gradually stronger, and Vargas, having worked so hard to overcome the early deficit, weakened bit by bit.

The seventh round was a big one for Trinidad, although it ended up even on the cards when Nady mistakenly deducted a point for a shot that actually landed on the belt line. Suddenly, this great fight was again in danger of reaching an unsatisfying ending, but Trinidad wisely resisted the urge to work Vargas' body the rest of the way, and there was never a threat of disqualification.

The ninth round was probably the best of the fight. Both men landed 32 punches, according to CompuBox stats, and there were several stretches when they both stood flat-footed just inches part, winging powerpunches with no regard for defense. Again, though, it was the 27-year-old Trinidad who was landing the more damaging blows. In the 10th, a fight that had been too close to call just a couple of rounds earlier was blown wide open when Vargas was penalized for going low. But after absorbing a beating for the first 2½ minutes of the 11th, a seemingly exhausted Vargas suddenly came alive with a left-right-right combination that wobbled the WBA champion and won Vargas the round on all three judges' cards.

Going into the 12th, though, Vargas needed a knockout to win, trailing by three points on Duane Ford's card, four points on Stanley Christodoulou's, and five points on Glen Hamada's. So with his left eye badly swollen and his fuel tank emptying, Vargas stepped in, looking to do more than just win the round. For his efforts, the young gladiator received a picturesque left hook to the jaw, an even better one than the shot that felled him in round one, and he dropped hard. Again he

PHOTO BY JED JACOBSOHN/ALLSPORT

Low point: Trinidad was penalized twice by referee Jay Nady for hitting below the belt, in the fourth round and in the seventh, putting himself in danger of being disqualified. But Vargas later acknowledged Trinidad's low blows as a "smart tactic" that helped the Puerto Rican buy himself time.

got up and looked to punch, and again Trinidad scored first with a hook, bringing Vargas to his hands and knees. Nady thought very seriously about stopping the fight at that point, but let the beating go on. Moments later, a crushing right sent Vargas down again, and at the 1:33 mark, the war was over.

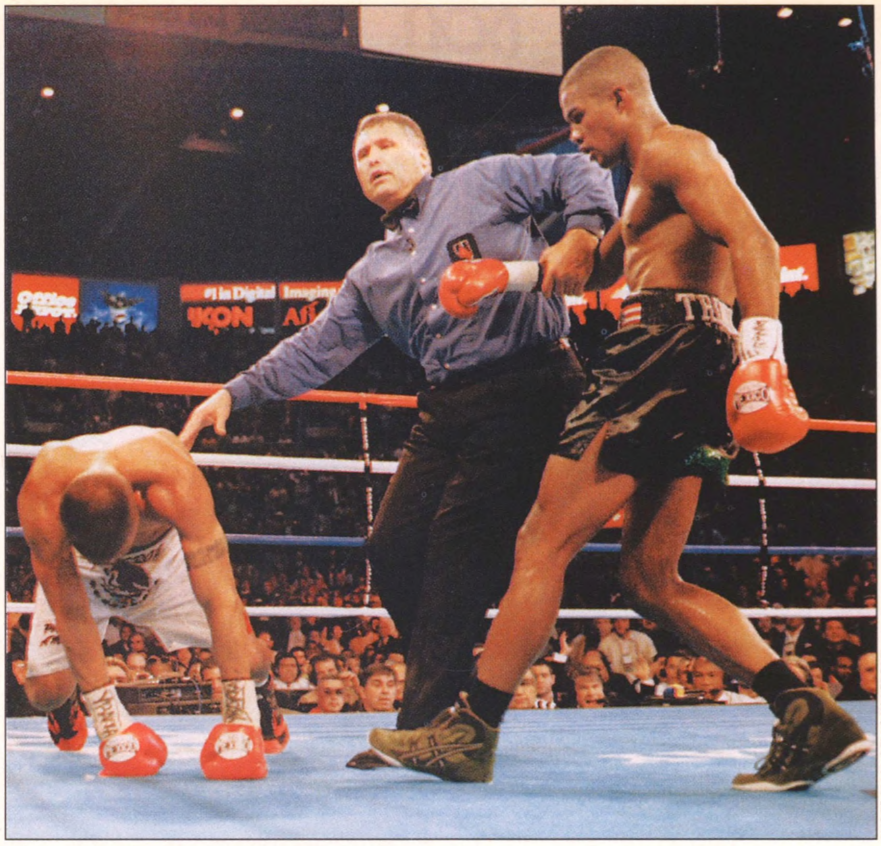
"It was the great fight I expected," Trinidad, 39-0 (32), said. "It was my toughest fight. Vargas was a good fighter, but I was well-prepared. I was surprised he made it out of the first round, but you have to give credit to his stamina, his conditioning. That's why he lasted. But I knew with *my* conditioning, even if it took 12, I would win."

At the postfight press conference, tears flowed from Trinidad as freely as the punches had about an hour earlier. The champion's emotions took hold of him as he tried to speak, a fitting ending to such a dramatic evening.

Vargas, meanwhile, went to Las Vegas' Valley Hospital afterward, and after a CATscan and a thorough examination revealed no serious damage, he was released at about 1 a.m. He expressed a strong desire for a rematch during a press conference three days later, and though only time will tell if his career will be affected by the physical damage he suffered, Vargas spoke proudly about the heart he showed and sounded like a man whose confidence will not be shattered by his first defeat. That's great news for the sport of boxing, because this was a fight that deserved to have no negatives attached to it.

"This was exactly what we needed in this sport," said TVKO Vice President Mark Taffet. "In my wildest dreams, I couldn't have expected this."

Now, we are compelled to look at what's about to begin: Felix Trinidad, the middleweight years. The number-one middleweight since Jones' departure, without question, has been IBF champion Bernard Hopkins. Hopkins recorded his 12th successful title defense across town at the Venetian the night before with a 10th-round knockout of top contender Antwun Echols, and invaded Trinidad's press conference in hopes of goading Tito into fighting him. But Trinidad has his sights set first on Don King stablemate William Joppy, the two-time WBA champion, who defended his title on the Trinidad-Vargas undercard with a fourth-round kayo of late substitute Jonathan Reid. Trinidad-Joppy is all but set for April 21, marking probably the most significant 160-pound fight since Jones bid the division adieu. After that, assuming Trinidad wins (and who wouldn't assume that after his performance against Vargas), hopefully we'll get Trinidad-Hopkins, probably the biggest middleweight fight since Leonard-Hagler.



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The end came at 1:33 of the 12th, with a brave but thoroughly beaten Vargas crumpling to the canvas for the fifth time in the fight. The win moved Trinidad one step closer to his goals of a fourth title at middleweight and an eventual showdown with Roy Jones.

Of course, there is one little snag: Trinidad wants to quickly jump from 160 to 168 and tackle the awesome Jones. Though it's not like the Puerto Rican sensation to duck anyone, could you blame him if he takes a fight with Jones for probably twice as much money as a Hopkins fight would be worth? What once seemed like an absurd reach for the naturally smaller Trinidad is beginning to look realistic to some, most notably HBO Sports Vice President of Programming Kery Davis.

"When people talked about the possibility of him fighting Roy Jones, I never wanted to think about it," Davis admitted. "But he looked bigger against Vargas. His legs and thighs were bigger than in the David Reid fight. He's clearly growing into a middleweight. It's no longer out of the realm of possibility that he could fight, and even be competitive with, and maybe beat Roy Jones."

It took Trinidad two tries to make weight for the Vargas fight, and he weighed 164 pounds at fight time, so he clearly isn't going to be small as a middleweight. But is he really that close to becoming a super middle? Let's hope not. He gave the junior middles two superfights, and look how well that turned out for him, so why not take on two champions at 160? If he beats Joppy and Hopkins, he can move up knowing he has made his mark on the fabled middleweight division, rather than being remembered as someone who merely passed through.

Greb, Robinson, Hagler ... Trinidad. The name doesn't sound out of place. The cycle of middleweight glory is about to reach another peak. So whether you watch the fights in your bell-bottoms, your neon short shorts, or your flannel shirt, just don't forget to bring your little Puerto Rican flag. ■

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The Action Is Up, But The Numbers Are Down

IS BOXING MINDING ITS OWN BUSINESS?

By Bernard Fernandez

Certain movie directors might be willing to accept low box office returns as a tradeoff for personal artistic expression, but the unforgiving world of sports commerce does not allow for interpretation that goes much beyond the bottom line.

If art for art's sake were the sole criteria for judging the state of boxing as 2000 winds to a close, the prognosis would be mostly positive. More than a few big fights were staged, although some did not live up to expectations, and televised boxing shows increased, with plans for more TV dates in the offing. But pay-per-view numbers were down, in some cases distressingly so, leaving an entire industry wondering what might be done to reenergize its product.

Even the much-discussed, perennially stalled matchup of WBC/IBF heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis and two-time former champ Mike Tyson, once projected as the greatest pay-per-view bonanza of all-time, doesn't appear to be the slam-dunk it might have been before the financial climate turned a bit nippy. And who's to say

Though Mike Tyson performed well against Andrew Golota, the pay-per-view did not, drawing the lowest buy-rate ever for a Tyson fight. Does this mean the boxing business is in trouble, or does it just mean fans are wising up to which fights are worth their money?

Tuned-out TV hurts sweet science

PHOTO BY JED JACOBSOHN/ALLSPORT

Lennox Lewis and David Tua put a lot of effort into selling their November heavyweight title fight, and the pay-per-view numbers were encouraging. Unfortunately, the fight itself was a dud, as champion Lewis easily outboxed Tua over 12 uneventful rounds in front of a capacity crowd.

that Lewis-Tyson ever makes it beyond the debating stage? The ongoing stalemate between HBO, which has exclusive rights to Lewis, and Showtime, which has Tyson, has made Lewis-Tyson more of a negotiating nightmare than a fan's dream. It is the equivalent of Rome burning while the pay-cable Neros fiddle.

Asked if Lewis-Tyson—if it could be made—would surpass the record 1.88 million buys for Tyson's second fight with Evander Holyfield, in 1997, HBO Sports President Ross Greenburg hedged.

"I'm not so sure," Greenburg said after Lewis scored a unanimous decision over David Tua that drew mixed critical and PPV reviews. "With the state of boxing today, the days of a 1.9 million buy are history. A reasonable number for that fight is more like 1.5 million."

And if Lewis-Tyson can't be made? What then? Reruns of Lewis' and Tyson's greatest hits on ESPN Classic?

"We'd have to line up the best potential challengers, be it Kirk Johnson, Hasim Rahman, or whomever," Greenburg said. "But it's not a long list. This is not the 1960s and '70s. There's no Ali, Frazier, Foreman, Quarry."

Showtime's Jay Larkin, who had said Tyson would cross the street to fight Lewis on HBO's pay-per-view arm, TVKO, "when pork chops are growing on the palm trees in Tel Aviv," also was bracing for implementation of a Plan B.

"It's a shame, a pity," Larkin said of the increasing likelihood that Lewis-Tyson will never happen. "Tyson would be the defining fight for Lennox Lewis, and Lewis is the most lucrative fight for Tyson. But HBO's position always has been that HBO fighters only fight on HBO.

"We've been consistently rebuffed by HBO, which seems to believe that what's good for HBO must be good for boxing."

Larkin said he was entertaining the notion—providing Tyson is not retired, as he claimed to be after his two-round debacle with serial quitter Andrew Golota—to pair his star attraction against Holyfield a third time, or possibly against a lesser marquee name.

"I'd much rather be sitting here with Mike Tyson fighting the X, Y, Zs of the

Boxing faces a pay-per-view showdown

Cable rivals watch Tyson with interest

PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

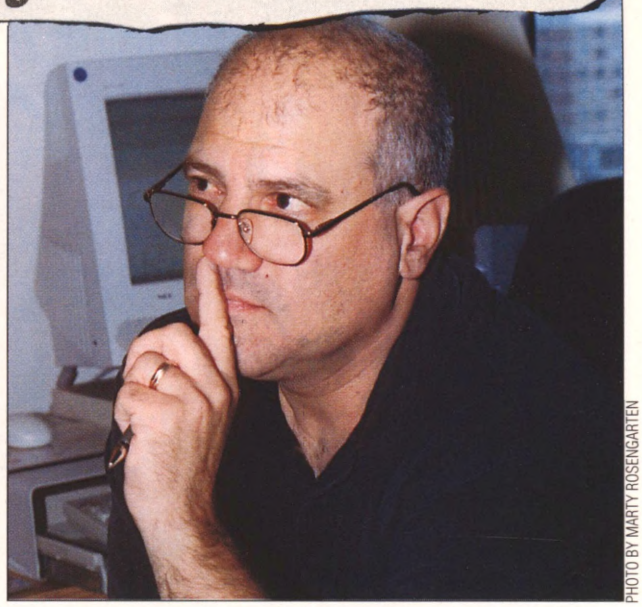
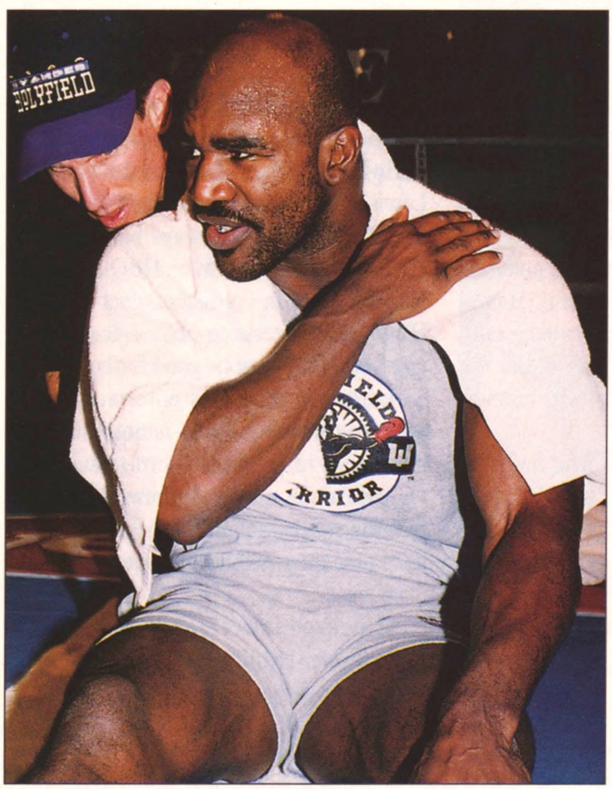


PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

HBO's Ross Greenburg (above) and Showtime's Jay Larkin (right) are going to have to hammer out some sort of agreement if boxing fans are to be treated to a Lewis-Tyson showdown. Greenburg believes the fight could rake in 1.5 million pay-per-view buys.

world than sitting there with Lennox Lewis fighting the X, Y, Zs of the world," Larkin said.

Boxing doesn't need more X, Y, Zs foisted upon it, at least not for pay-per-view consumption. What it needs, what it has always needed, is a steady stream of alluring matchups and boffo performances from its diminishing club of alpha males: Lewis, Tyson, Roy Jones, Oscar De La Hoya, and Felix Trinidad. Those who are close to crashing the inner circle, because of their talent or salability, include Sugar Shane Mosley, Prince Naseem Hamed, and Fernando Vargas.



Age appears to have caught up with boxing's all-time highest-grossing act, Evander Holyfield. "The Real Deal's" days as a pay-per-view attraction are certainly numbered.

Still on the outside looking in, hoping to make that oh-so-difficult step up to must-see-TV status, are any number of gifted fighters who remain something less than household names. Bernard Hopkins holds that chapter's presidency because of seniority, but ring some doorbells and ask those who answer if they know who, say, Zab Judah is.

The problem for the Greenburgs and the Larkins is that boxing's locomotives, the big wheels who make boxing's train chug along, are, for whatever reasons, losing steam.

Holyfield, the gallant old warrior who stands as the highest-grossing act in boxing history with $175-million-plus in purses, gives every indication that, at age 38, he finally is wheezing to a stop. Forget the WBA championship he holds and thus the distinction of being the only man to hold some version of the heavyweight title on four separate occasions; most people recognize Lewis as the one, true king of boxing's big men. Even a rumored defense in China, possibly a rematch with John Ruiz, can't obscure the fact that Commander Vander struggled to win the vacant title against the undistinguished Ruiz, an opponent he would have had for lunch a few years ago.

Age, the foe no fighter ever defeats, outpointed the great Julio Cesar Chavez—who was ushered, unceremoniously, from the sport by WBC super lightweight champ Kostya Tszyu in a bout that never should have been sanctioned—and continues to beat the hell of the legend of Roberto Duran.

Even those with gas in the tank and relatively low odometer readings, however, seemingly are in need of career tuneups.

Lewis? The big Briton, whose drab personality has hindered his attempts at building popular support in the United States, where a hip image somehow has become more important than substance, appeared to have gained momentum with back-to-back two-round blowouts of Michael Grant and Francois Botha. But the cautious, cal-

culating, and dispassionate Lewis, the guy who never met a risk he couldn't avoid, was on display—at $1,000 per ringside seat and $44.95 on pay-per-view—in his technically proficient points win over the plodding Tua.

TVKO's Mark Taffet professed to be pleased with the 420,000 pay-per-view buys for Lewis-Tua, which exceeded the 350,000 buys for Lewis' other PPV bout in 2000, against Grant.

"That really is a miraculous performance given the presidential election controversy that we had this week," Taffet said, referring to the Bush-Gore slugfest that never seemed like it would end in a decision once Florida went to the scorecards. But what does it say about boxing when interest in a seemingly attractive heavyweight championship showdown—Lewis-Tua was touted, inaccurately as it turned out, in some circles as an updated version of Ali-Frazier—is tamped down by televised updates of squabbling lawyers and ex-diplomat spin doctors?

Tyson? His three bouts in 2000 saw him continue to devolve into a tawdry circus act. Iron Bite's three-ring—uh, three-fight—odyssey began in Manchester, England, his first overseas bout since his 1990 loss to Buster Douglas in Tokyo. No-chance British champ Julius Francis, alas, was no Buster; Tyson blew through him in two one-sided rounds. So confident was Francis that he would hit the canvas at some point that he sold advertising on the soles of his shoes to *The Mirror*, a London tabloid.

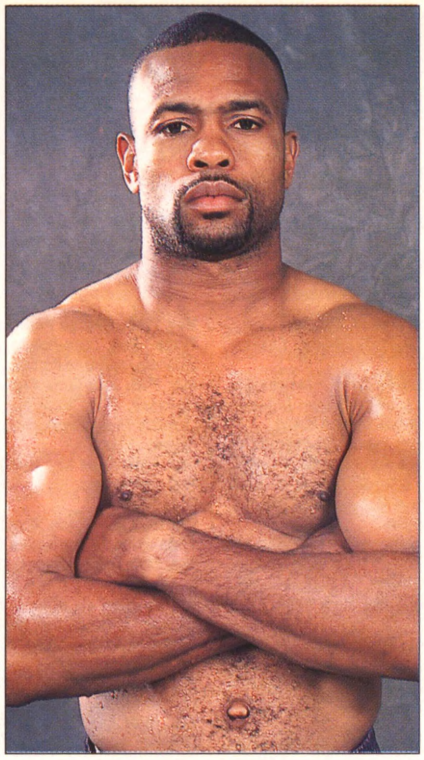


PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

Roy Jones has been a disappointment his whole career, at least from a business standpoint. Though it was priced considerably lower than most other recent pay-per-view fights, Jones' September title defense against Eric Harding still didn't sell well.

Tyson's next UK adventure was more eventful, and more troubling. In Glasgow, Scotland, he crushed Lou Savarese in 38 seconds, but he also knocked down referee John Coyle as he attempted to inflict further punishment on Savarese after Coyle had waved the mismatch to a halt. That bit of extracurricular activity resulted in Tyson being hit with a $187,500 fine from the British Board of Boxing Control, and an admonition to stay out of Britain.

As if all that weren't enough, reports also circulated that Tyson had physically assaulted promoter Frank Warren because he believed Warren should have picked up the tab for $600,000 worth of jewelry Tyson had purchased on his previous visit.

(Continued on page 60)

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Shane Mosley's rousing decision win over Oscar De La Hoya in June sent the fighters spinning in opposite directions. Mosley is the network's hottest fighter, whereas mega-star De La Hoya has temporarily vanished from the boxing scene.

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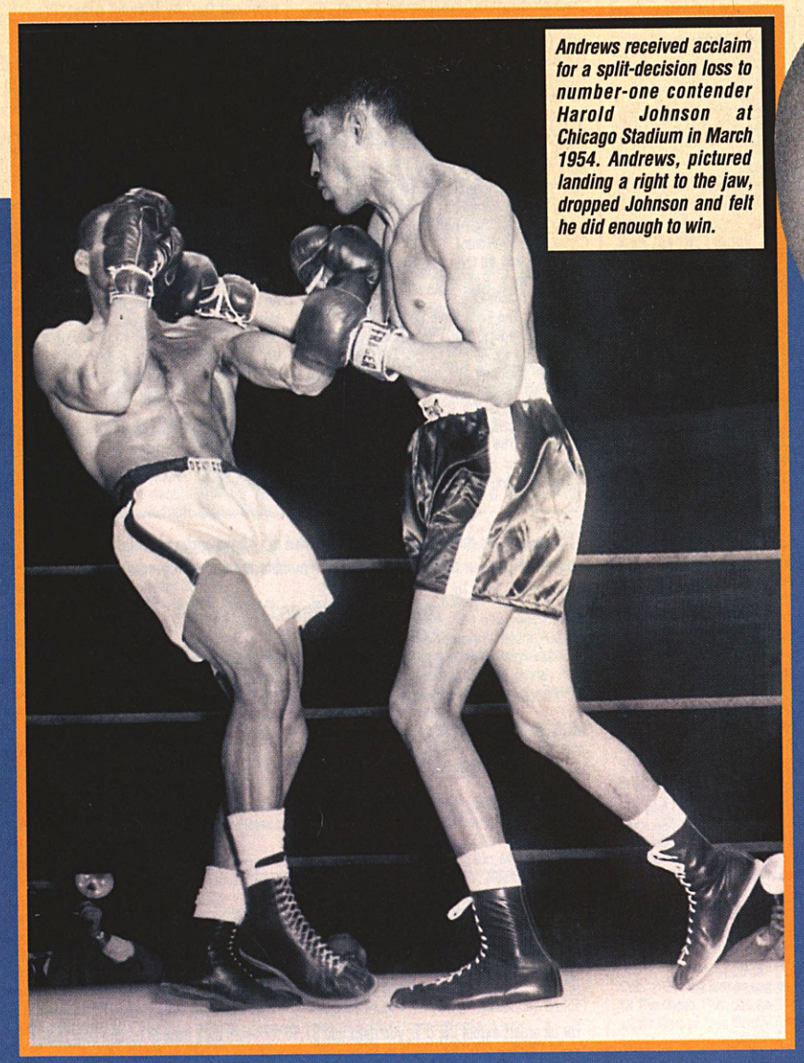


Andrews received acclaim for a split-decision loss to number-one contender Harold Johnson at Chicago Stadium in March 1954. Andrews, pictured landing a right to the jaw, dropped Johnson and felt he did enough to win.

By Pete Ehrmann

A lot of fighters who never came as close to the championship of the world as Paul Andrews did spend their whole lives thinking about what might have been. When Andrews thinks about that, he's relieved that he didn't do any better than the number-two ranking he achieved as a light heavyweight almost a half-century ago.

"Of course I wanted to be champion then," the 70-year-old Andrews says, "but to this day, I'm really happy I wasn't. Had I become champion, I'm sure I would have destroyed myself. I would have got myself in a lot of trouble and totally condemned myself to hell. I did enough as it was. I served Satan damned well."

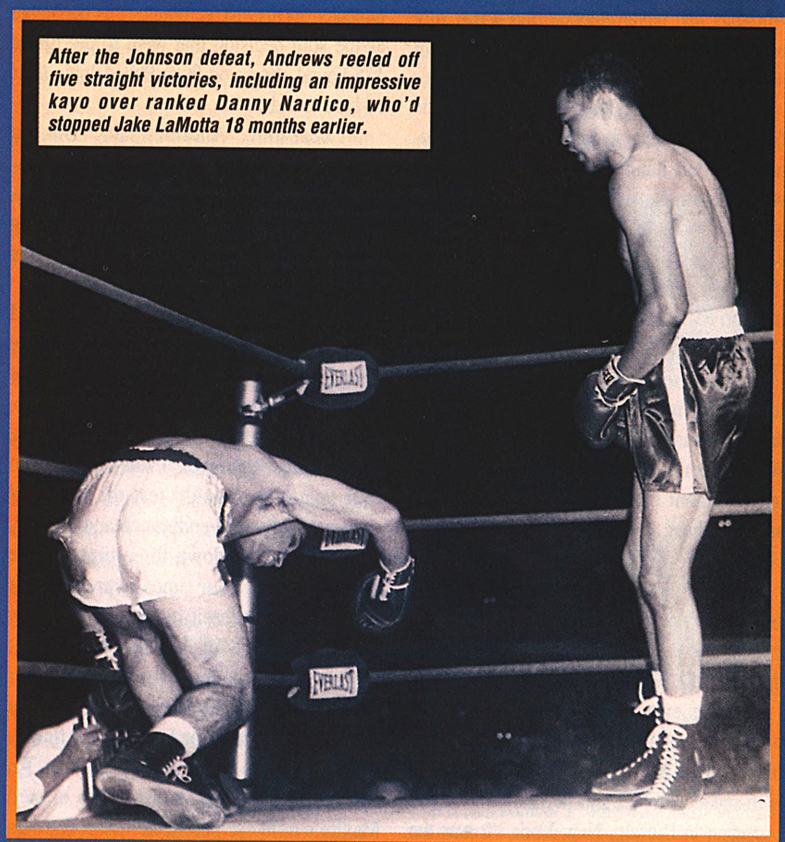
Today, Andrews works the opposite corner, dishing out Proverbs and Ecclesiastes with lessons in the ring arts at the Broadway Gym in Los Angeles. It's been a remarkable comeback on both fronts for the man who once renounced both God and boxing, blaming the former for his failure to achieve the dream inspired by heavyweight champion Joe Louis in 1938.

Andrews was eight years old when he listened to the radio broadcast of Louis' dramatic first-round knockout of Max Schmeling. He was a severely introverted loner who suffered from dyslexia, "too shy and too scared" to participate in sports until that night when Louis made all of America proud, and especially members of his own race.

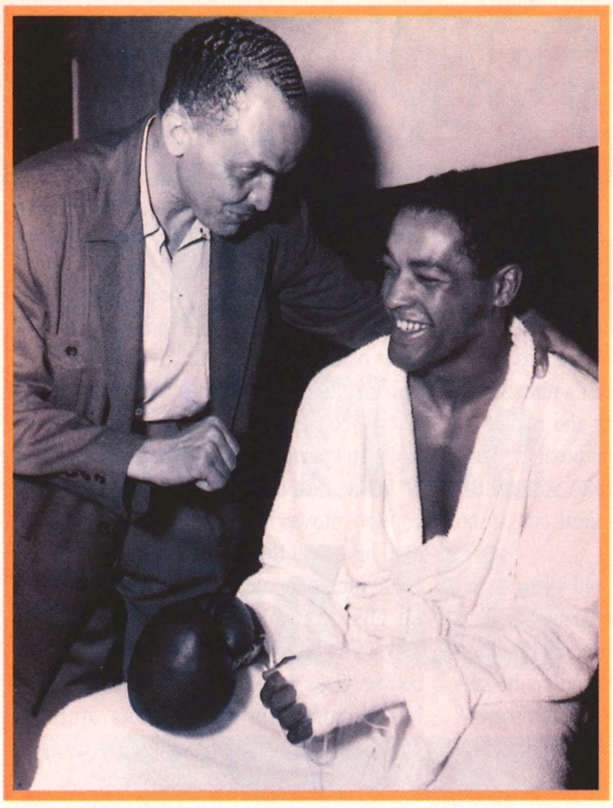
"He was like the black Moses as far as I and most black people were concerned," Andrews said. "He was my god, and I wanted to be like him."

Toward that end, in time Andrews started going to Grupp's Gym in Harlem, where most of the famous black fighters trained. Too shy to actually work out, he'd sit and just watch the likes of Louis and Sugar Ray Robinson go through their paces. Then he'd go home, take off his shirt, and shadow box, copying moves he'd memorized at the gym, until his sweat flecked the walls.

A high school dropout, Andrews joined the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division in 1947. His was an all-black unit—the military services were strictly segregated then—but because his mother was mulatto, Andrews looked more Latin than black ("I wasn't ebony, let's put it that way"), and as a result, he says, he was saddled with more than his share of grunge duty. To get out of it, he went out for the base boxing team.



After the Johnson defeat, Andrews reeled off five straight victories, including an impressive kayo over ranked Danny Nardico, who'd stopped Jake LaMotta 18 months earlier.



Andrews shares a prefight laugh with manager Marshall Miles, who did an excellent job moving him up the light heavyweight rankings early in his career. Later on, however, Miles made some dubious moves that Andrews feels prevented him from ever getting a title shot.

Andrews had never stepped into a real ring before, but nine bouts later he was the light heavyweight champion of Fort Bragg.

Persuaded to try the pros, he stopped his first two opponents in July of 1950, but fractured his left hand in the second fight and went back to New York to get married and go to school on the G.I. Bill. A year later, he was fighting again and went 9-0, finishing '51 with a decision over Cal Vernon, who'd been an NCAA 175-pound champion for the University of Wisconsin.

Largely self-taught, the 6'3" Andrews lost to Al Winn and future heavyweight contender Tommy Harrison in 1952, but won seven other fights and kept up the steady improvement the following year, beating, among others, decent heavyweights Toxey Hall and Bob Dunlap.

"The hardest thing," he said, "was to go from the dressing room to the ring. I was more nervous about that than the fight. Once the bell rang, I was all right."

He was even better after he hooked up with Marshall Miles, the manager who'd once handled his idol, Joe Louis. Miles was a high-stakes gambler and he ran the numbers operation in Buffalo, New York. "It was the only way Negroes could have any money in those days," Andrews said. "He was educated, too, and for me, being a Negro kid from the South (Lafayette, Louisiana), he seemed like a very sophisticated man."

Under Miles' direction, Andrews moved up fast. He hadn't yet even fought a 10-rounder when he was ranked ninth in the world at light heavyweight. Then, on St. Patrick's Day of 1954, Andrews made the proverbial frying-pan-into-the-fire leap by facing the number-one contender for the title worn by Archie Moore.

Whether Harold Johnson or the national TV audience watching the match at Chicago Stadium was more surprised when an Andrews left hook to the jaw dropped Johnson, unbeaten in his last 11 bouts, is as debatable as the split decision that went to the future 175-pound champion from Philadelphia after 10 hard rounds.

"I beat him," Andrews said. "But me being the unknown fighter and him the number-one contender, they gave him the decision. In the fight game, when you're fighting a more experienced fighter and he gets a split decision, you won the fight."

It was a moral victory, at any rate, and Andrews followed it with five consecutive literal ones. Included among them were impressive kayos of ranked Danny Nardico, who'd legitimately stopped Jake LaMotta, and Canadian champion Yvon Durelle, who four years later would test the limits of champion Moore's endurance and chin by knocking Archie down three times in the first round and four times overall before going to sleep himself in the 11th round of their famous 1958 title bout brawl.

But Andrews' match against former world champion Joey Maxim on November 24, 1954, brought to the fore a telling flaw in the ring makeup of the rangy Buffaloan. An Andrews left hook completely closed Maxim's right eye before the first round was half over. The injury hampered Maxim for most of the 10-round fight, but Andrews not only failed to take advantage of the situation, he actually went out of his way not to by aiming his punches elsewhere. Maxim won a close decision.

"I had too much compassion," Andrews said. "I didn't like to hurt anybody. Clean kayos were good, but I didn't like to batter anybody. When I got a guy hurt, I hit him to the body."

In an effort to change his thinking, Miles brought in "The Brown Bomber," Louis himself, to work with Andrews.

"Man, we used to have a lot of fun. He was like a big kid. He got me in a bad habit, eating ice cream. I could eat a quart at a time. That's why I'm so big now. He was a beautiful person, a gentleman, a hell of a guy."

But the former heavyweight champion's influence on Andrews didn't extend much past the frozen dessert section.

"Joe told me, 'You'd be a champion if you had the killer instinct.' I said I was stopping guys, but he said, 'Yeah, when they hurt you, you retaliate. But it's not natural with you.'

"I figured he was an old man just jealous of me because I had what he once was. You know how stupid youth is."

Nevertheless, Louis must have felt like Professor Henry Higgins working Andrews' corner when, a month after the Maxim fight, his pupil demolished "Boardwalk" Billy Smith, the top-ranked contender since Moore defeated Johnson in their title match a few months before. Andrews knocked Smith down four times en route to a sixth-round knockout that upped Andrews to the number-two contender slot and made him Fighter of the Month in THE RING.

Ironically, that's when things started going south for him. According to the Associated Press account of the Smith fight, "Andrews probably won a title fight with his surprising victory. The International Boxing Club had promised the winner a February 4 [1955] bout with Archie Moore in New York." But instead, Andrews ended up fighting Johnson again on February 11, a lateral move that he still doesn't understand yet he accepted then because it was arranged by Miles, whom he trusted and "looked at like a father."

Now he blames his manager and even his hero Louis for the sixth-round kayo he suffered at Madison Square Garden.

The lack of a killer instinct, one of Andrews' glaring flaws, surfaced when he faced former light heavyweight champion Joey Maxim. An Andrews left hook completely closed Maxim's right eye in the first round, but Andrews failed to attack the area the rest of the fight and lost a close 10-round decision.

"Joe overtrained me," Andrews said. "Just two weeks before the fight, I was down to 168. My sparring partners were manhandling me all over the ring. Sugar Ray Robinson even went to Miles and said, 'Marshall, if there's any way in hell to pull this boy out of that fight, pull him out.'"

Instead, Johnson put him out with a right to the jaw, after easily controlling the match from the opening bell.

After starting a comeback at heavyweight a few weeks later with a decision win over Jimmy Slade, Andrews and former heavyweight champion Ezzard Charles met at Chicago Stadium. Charles was knocked down in the second round, but at the end of 10 rounds, two of three officials voted for him.

"I beat Charles," Andrews said. "I look at the film all of the time. He deliberately hit me low. But I understand, he was an old man fighting to win."

There was no doubt cement-fisted Bob Satterfield knocked out Andrews in the sixth round of their December 6, 1955, fight in Buffalo. And in Andrews' mind, there's no doubt, either, that the result was exactly what Miles had in mind after discovering the fighter was seeing a woman in whom Miles was also interested.

"I guess he wanted to embarrass me and get me beat," Andrews said. "The only time he ever talked to me in the corner was during that fight. I was beating Satterfield, but Miles said, 'What the hell's wrong with you? You're either going to knock this guy out, or get knocked out.'

"I got caught trying to knock him out."

While he now questions the loyalty of some people involved with his career, Andrews admits he hardly went around with a halo, either. Ice cream wasn't his only indulgence.

"I was a damned good disciple of Satan when I was fighting. I never had no problem with women. Women were always after me. I was drinking. I had a pretty exciting and sinful life and I was enjoying it."

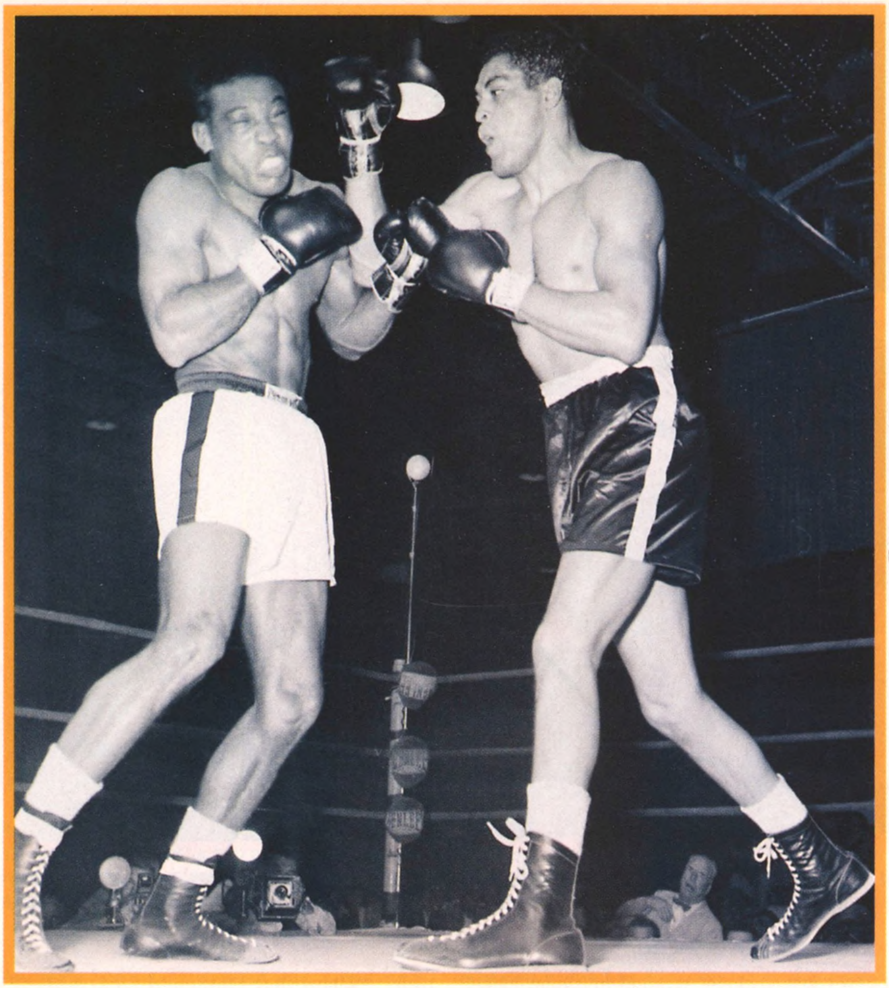
He's convinced that if he had become a champion, he would have enjoyed it to death.

"Heroin and dope were coming in pretty strong then, and had I become champion, I'd have destroyed my body as well as my soul," he said.

As it was, after the Satterfield fight, he had a messed-up right hand and a worse attitude. "When that happened," he said, "I turned my back on God and just went crazy."

Andrews recalls getting ready for church one Sunday when he angrily decided that

After the Maxim loss, Miles brought in heavyweight great Joe Louis to train Andrews. The goal was to bring out Andrews' killer instinct, but the fighter admits he didn't take "The Brown Bomber's" advice seriously enough and made little advancement under his tutelage.



Probably Andrews' best win was his December 1954 knockout of top-rated "Boardwalk" Billy Smith, which earned him Fighter of the Month honors from THE RING. Andrews scored four knockdowns en route to the sixth-round stoppage.

there couldn't be a God, because if there was, "He wouldn't have given me all this ability and then taken it away from me." Instead of going to church that day, he went to see a woman.

Drinking more and training less, Andrews fought infrequently and desultorily over the next few years, his objective now just a payday.

"I could protect myself and not get hurt," he said. "But I wasn't in condition. Some I won, some I lost."

On June 12, 1962, Andrews took a fight with heavyweight contender Zora Folley on eight days notice. "I knew Folley couldn't hurt me, because I sparred with him," he said. But in the gym before the fight, Andrews' right eye began watering excessively and giving him double vision. Needing the money, he went ahead with the fight anyway and was stopped in seven rounds. An examination afterward disclosed permanent nerve damage to the eye.

That was it for boxing as far as Andrews, 37-10 (21), was concerned. Thoroughly embittered by everything that had happened to him in the sport (including, he says, three offers to throw fights that he summarily rejected), for the next 18 years he "wouldn't even look at a fighter or a fight."

Things were bad all around, until one night about a year later, when he drunk himself to sleep with a half-gallon of burgundy wine.

"At three in the morning, I woke up crying. I got down on my hands and knees and asked God to forgive me, and I made a change." He settled down in Los Angeles, marrying again and working as a laborer at several Hollywood studios.

But boxing was still anathema to Andrews until 1980. In June of that year, he was employed at Universal Studios when a strike shut down production there. Unable to work for six months, Andrews was driving on the Hollywood freeway one night when "something told me to go by the gym."

Andrews listened and drove to the 78th Street Gym. He didn't have anything else to do. There, he met a friend, Haywood Jones, who asked him to take a look at a welterweight he was managing, Kevin Morgan. Morgan's career was going nowhere, and Jones figured the fighter's legs were shot. Andrews watched Morgan move around and decided it was nothing instruction in proper balance and punching leverage wouldn't cure. He agreed to provide it for as long as the Universal strike lasted.

"Morgan won six straight fights, and sent three guys to the hospital pissing blood," Andrews said.

Andrews has been back in the game ever since. But he works strictly as an instructor in the gym. "I love the fighting, the competition of it. I teach these guys, but I don't even want to go to the fights," he said. "It's an art, and if you know how to do it, it's a beautiful thing and you won't get hurt."

That's what he tries to impart every day at the Broadway Gym, along with something Andrews considers even more important. When somebody asks for boxing instructions from the once painfully shy man who credits boxing for making him bold now, Andrews takes out his Bible and tells them, "Maybe you'll learn how to fight, but you'll also learn about Jesus Christ."

Bill Slayton, former trainer of Hall of Fame heavyweight champion Ken Norton, runs the gym.

"He's a throwback to the old school," he said of Andrews. "He's stern, but Paul's got a pretty good head on his shoulders and he's not going to tell you any lies. He's a very good man."

Nobody calls him champ, but if he had become one, Andrews insists, he wouldn't be around today.

"I have seen and known quite a few people who went to the top, and they were all destroyed. They had the best of everything—all the women, drinks, and money, and it all got away from them.

"Now, I'm not trying to be nobody. I'm just doing what I like to do. I have a wonderful wife, and God in my life. I'm very rich."

He realizes a fighter who thanks God because he never won the title might sound a bit strange, to put it kindly.

"I know I'm crazy," said Andrews, "but I'm not punch drunk." ■

Pete Ehrmann is a freelance writer based in West Allis, Wisconsin, and a regular contributor to this magazine.

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SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Lennox Lewis W 12 David Tua
(Retains WBC/IBF Titles)
Clifford Etienne W 10 Lawrence Clay-Bey
Vitaly Klitschko W 12 Timo Hoffman
Larry Donald D 12 Obed Sullivan
Michael Moorer KO 4 Lorenzo Boyd
Brian Nielsen W 8 Dick Ryan
Larry Holmes KO 6 Mike Weaver
Nate Jones KO 2 Sam Hampton
Joe Mesi KO 3 Joey Guy
Nicolay Valouev KO 1 Tony Fiso
Rocky Gannon KO 1 Mark Connolly
Rob Calloway KO 3 Jason Nicholson
Kelvin Davis KO 1 Wes Martin
Garing Lane KO 2 Tommy Muccigrosso
Albert Sosnowski KO 5 Michael Murray
Friday Ahunanya W 8 Otis Tisdale
Josue Blocus W 6 Mario Cawley
Eric Kirkland KO 1 Daryl Morgan
Sergei Lyakhovich W 6 Derrell Dixon
Malik Scott KO 2 Tony Foster
Tye Fields KO 1 Andy Sample
Butterbean D 4 Abdul Muhaymin

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Chris Johnson W 8 Frankie Edmundson
Torsten May W 8 Ian Kulkov
Rob Norton W 10 Darron Griffiths
Chris Mills KO 2 Carlos Norman Bates
Elvir Muriqi W 6 Ronald Boddie
Andre Echols KO 1 Sal Diaz

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

Yory Boy Campas KO 4 Rob Bleakley
Julian Letterlough KO 6 Max Heyman
Miguel Jimenez KO 5 Segundo Mercado
Neil Simpson KO 1 Mark Delaney
Kamel Amrane W 10 Joe Siluvangi
Paul Briggs KO 8 Adrian Bellin
Reggie Strickland W 8 Reuben Ruiz
Jacqui Frazier-Lyde KO 1 Nichole Armstrong

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Mads Larsen KO 4 Nick Rupa
Omar Sheika KO 1 Lloyd Bryan
Andrei Schkalikov D 10 Youssef Tensouri
David Starie KO 6 Guy Waters
Freeman Barr KO 3 Ricky Ramirez
Richard Grant W 10 Kevin Pompey
Anthony Hanshaw KO 1 Jeff Brownfield
Anthony Hanshaw W 8 Juan Carlos Viloria
Daniel Judah W 4 Eric Howard
Rogelio Vargas KO 1 Mark Manibusan

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Bernard Hopkins KO 10 Antwun Echols
(Retains IBF Title)
William Joppy KO 4 Jonathan Reid
(Retains WBA Title)
David Reid W 10 Kirino Garcia
Jose Luis Lopez KO 8 David Lewter
Michael Lerma KO 7 Candy Robertson
Manny Sobral W 8 Eric Holland
Jesse Brinkley KO 6 Ed Brown

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Junior fly champ Ricardo Lopez crunches Ratanapol Vorapin with an uppercut

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Felix Trinidad KO 12 Fernando Vargas
(Retains WBA Title; Wins IBF Title)
Andrew Lewis KO 2 Sebastian Valdez
Shibata Flores W 12 Emmett Linton
Miguel Angel Gonzalez KO 1 Alex Lubo
Adrian Stone KO 2 Derek Roche
Tony Badea W 10 Gilberto Flores
Anthony Farnell KO 7 Scott Dixon
Rhoshii Wells KO 5 Angel Hernandez
Dwain Williams Tech. Win 6 Pedro Ortega
Michael Rask KO 10 Patrick Rubes
Richard Williams KO 4 Howard Clarke
Travis Sims W 8 Kevin Kelly
Takaloo KO 2 Jason Collins
Kokkyul Song Tech. Draw 3 Seiji Takechi
Ruben Groenewald KO 11 Cyprian Emeti
Kelly Pavlik KO 2 Lafayette Randolph

WELTERWEIGHTS

Willy Wise W 12 Darren Bruce
Cory Spinks W 10 Edgar Ruiz
Larry Marks W 10 Charles Murray
Harry Dhami W 12 Spencer McCracken
Nick Acevedo KO 6
Marco Antonio Lizarraga
Chris Linson W 12 Gerald Reed
Horatio Garcia W 10 Victor Rosado
Jawaid Khaliq W 12 Sean Sullivan
Carlos Quintana KO 2 Rosember Palacios
David Jackson KO 1 Frederick Tillman
Christy Martin KO 1 Sabrina Hall

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Randall Bailey KO 2 Billy Wooten
John-John Molina W 10 Ben Tackie
Jesse James Leija W 10 Ivan Robinson
Eamonn Magee W 12 Shea Neary
Junior Witter KO 3 Chris Henry
Jorge Paez W 10 Mike Davis
Carlos Hernandez KO 3 Angel Aldama
Stephan Carr KO 1 Nasser Anthumani
Manard Reed KO 2 Sam Harvey
Hicklet Lau W 8 Arturo Reyes
Franco Ogentho W 8 Imauri Paul

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Angel Manfredy KO 6 Carlos Ramirez
Artur Grigorian W 12 Antonio Pitalua
Djamel Lifa KO 8 Sedat Puskullut
Rick Roberts W 10 Takehiro Shimada
Juan Gomez KO 2 Arturo Reyes
Julio Diaz KO 6 Lalo Perez
Calvin Davis W 8 Scott Buck
Justo Sencion W 8 Joseph Figueroa

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

Steve Forbes KO 8 John Brown
(Wins Vacant IBF Title)
Tontcho Tontchev W 12 Charles Shepherd
Luis Lizarraga KO 4 Jermaine Fields

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Nana Konadu KO 5 Amador Vasquez
Philip Ndou KO 2 Manuel Sepeda
Scott Harrison KO 12 Eric Odumassi
Daniel Seda KO 9 Daniel Jimenez
Manabu Fukushima KO 2 Reynante Jamili
Richard Evatt W 10 Roy Rutherford
Luis Fuente KO 5 Carlos Ochoa

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Marco Antonio Barrera KO 6 Jesus Salud
Danny Romero KO 4 Arman Pedimonte
Yober Ortega KO 11 Kozo Ishii
David Guerault KO 2 Ahmed Meriche
Vladislav Antonov W 12 Sergei Devakov
Michael Alldis KO 6 Drew Docherty
Sandor Koczak KO 2 Dragomir Ovidiu
Setsuo Segawa W 10 Tetsutora Senrima
Alejandro Estrada KO 4 Ulises Flores

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Johnny Bredahl KO 5 Alexandre da Silva
Adan Vargas W 12 Ivan Alvarez
Mauricio Pastrana W 10 Roberto Lopez
Genaro Garcia KO 2 Rafael Marquez
Yoshiaki Matsukura KO 6
Napa Kiatwanchai
Joseph Agbeko W 12 Johannes Maisa

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Gerry Penalosa KO 6 Ratanachai Vorapin
Ferid Ben Jeddou W 12 Sipho Manty
Abbey Mnisi KO 3 Mzi Dintsi
Hideyasu Ishihara KO 2
Pornchai Sitpraprom
Pedro Alcazar KO 3 Jose Morales
Gabriel Munoz W 8 Miguel Granados

FLYWEIGHTS

Irene Pacheco W 12 Hawk Makepula
(Retains IBF Title)
Peter Culshaw KO 1 Dimitar Alipiev
Jason Booth W 12 Ian Napa
Nelson Dieppa W 10 Julio Coronel
Hayato Asai W 10 Gabriel Mira

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Ricardo Lopez KO 3 Ratanapol Vorapin
(Retains IBF Title)
Juanito Rubillar W 10 Yuki Hashiguchi
Koki Tanaka W 12 Pilkoo Kang

STRAWWEIGHTS

Juan Alfonso Keb KO 12 Oswaldo Guerrero
Khulile Makeba W 12 Martin Mahlangu

RINGSIDE REPORTS

FIGHTER *of the* MONTH

While David Tua spent his free moments in training camp playing ping-pong, Lennox Lewis spent his playing chess. Clearly, Lewis' preparation won out, as their heavyweight title showdown on November 11 featured very little of the back-and-forth you see in a ping-pong match, and quite a bit of the tactical maneuvering that takes place on a chess board.

Lewis was masterful, even if it wasn't the kind of mastery the fans wanted to see. He struck early with his queen, freezing Tua with a couple of powerful right hands in the first round, then let his pawns do the damage the rest of the way, jabbing and jabbing to keep the Samoan in check. He deployed occasional hooks and rights as though they were rooks and knights, and Tua simply had no answer for the champion's arsenal. Lewis never went all-out for the checkmate, but he never had to. The ring was *his* playing board, and he was in complete control nearly the entire way.

Bobby Fischer has nothing on Lennox Lewis. He took on the consensus number-one contender, and when it was all over, he was still the king.

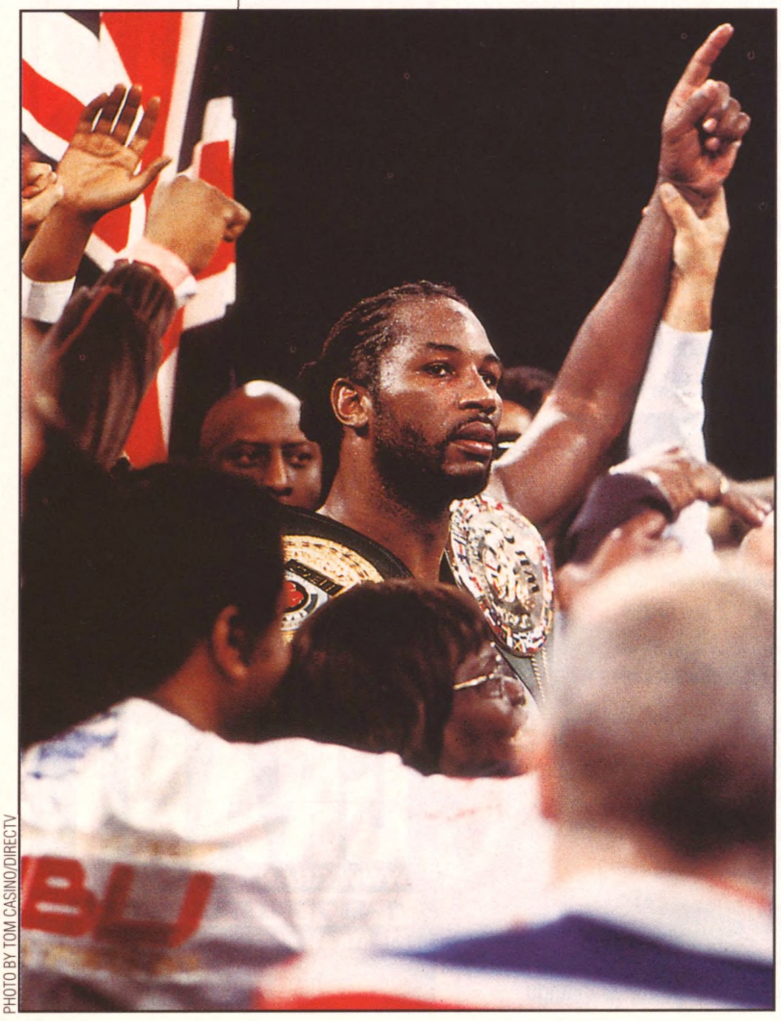

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/DIRECTV

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Lennox Lewis

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Makepula and Pacheco trades lefts en route to controversial decision

Irene Pacheco W 12
Masibulele Makepula

Las Vegas, Nevada: Why a champion from Colombia and a challenger from South Africa were fighting in front of a couple of dozen disinterested spectators in Las Vegas was almost as difficult to fathom as the majority decision that allowed Pacheco to hang onto the IBF flyweight title. Most ringsiders at the House of Blues had the previously undefeated Makepula ahead after 12 interesting rounds, but two of the three official judges gave the bout to Pacheco, and theirs were the scores that counted.

Southpaw Pacheco, 111, making his third defense of the belt he won in April 1999, was a good head taller than the diminutive Makepula, 111, but that didn't stop the 27-year-old challenger from being the early aggressor. He nimbly worked his way inside and scored with quick punches, but frequently failed to follow his advantage, which ultimately contributed to his defeat.

Although Pacheco, 29, employed good lateral movement, he was outworked by Makepula the first half of the fight. But as the bout progressed, the champion's strength and punching power began to tell and he was able to gradually close the gap. The rangy Pacheco, 25-0 (19), incrementally slowed Makepula with bodyshots and swept the last three rounds on all three official cards. Makepula, the flag bearer for South Africa in the opening ceremonies of the 1996 Olympics, finished the fight with swollen eyes, a bloody nose, and an egg-sized bump on his forehead.

Judge Al Siciliano (USA) had the fight even at 114-114, but was overruled by Doug Tucker (USA) and Melvina Lathan (USA), who scored it for Pacheco, 117-111 and 118-110, respectively. THE RING felt Makepula's early lead was sufficient to carry him to a narrow 116-114 victory.

"I thought I clearly won," said Makepula after seeing his record fall to 18-1 (12). "What else is there to say?"

"Maybe judging like this is why the IBF is in so much trouble," said Bubba Stotts, Makepula's trainer. "I thought Makepula won the fight. The draw, okay, we can live with that. But he didn't lose the fight."

ESPN's Bob Yalen said that he was interested in making a rematch.

The referee was Richard Steele (USA).

Television: ESPN2

Promoter: Main Events

(11-10-00)

Nigel Collins

Hector Camacho Jr. W 10
Joe Hutchinson

New York, New York: Fighting for the first time in the city where he grew up, Camacho turned in a big rotten apple of a performance that brought immediately to mind the stink-it-out style his father has been torturing fans with for years. The unbeaten 22-year-old did more than enough to beat the mediocre Hutchinson, but not nearly enough to please the sellout crowd at The Theater at Madison Square Garden, who booed their lungs out in the final rounds of the main undercard bout in support of Shane Mosley-Antonio Diaz.

Whenever you have two southpaws in the ring and one of them is named Camacho, you know you're not going to get Hagler-Hearns. But considering Junior was making his HBO debut, and considering that late-replacement Hutchinson, 18-2-2 (8), had shown himself to be a game scrapper when he fought Arturo Gatti

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Camacho takes a break from being boring to whack Hutchinson with a right

two months earlier, the potential for a decent fight seemed to be there. And in fact, the first five rounds were at least fairly interesting, if not quite action-packed.

Camacho, 141½, Puerto Rico, used his superior speed to dominate the first round, as he circled, scored well to the body, and rattled off two- and three-punch combinations for which Hutchinson, 137½, Indianapolis, Indiana, had no answer. But a lunging right in the second round by Hutchinson made Camacho stumble a bit, and, though it was by no means on par with the punch from Edwin Rosario that forever changed Macho Sr.'s career, Hector Jr. became decidedly more defensive the rest of the way.

In the fourth, a very low right by Camacho earned him a point deduction, but he got the point back when Hutchinson, 30, landed a low right of his own in the fifth. By this time, the crowd had already turned against Camacho, chanting "Bulls___!" after referee Steve Smoger (USA) chose to penalize Hutchinson, but the negative reaction didn't seem to bother Camacho. He settled into his groove of firing quick shots, dancing away, and clinching when necessary, and dominated the dreadfully dull second half of the fight while Hutchinson, tiring and bleeding above the right eye from round six on, ineffectively chased the young prospect and threw far too few punches.

After the final bell rang, Camacho, 30-0 (17), hopped from turnbuckle to turnbuckle, almost as if checking to see which side of the arena could boo him the loudest. But there was no question he had won the fight. Judge Larry Hazzard Jr. (USA) scored it 98-90, Steve Weisfeld (USA) had it 97-91, and Melvina Lathan (USA) saw it 96-92, the same as THE RING. Still, the fight reinforced the impression that Camacho isn't nearly as gifted as his father was, doesn't like to work very hard, and probably isn't ready for the title shot he's been clamoring for.

Promoters: Cedric Kushner Promotions, America Presents

(11-4-00)

Eric Raskin

Clifford Etienne W 10 Lawrence Clay-Bey

Las Vegas, Nevada: While the capacity crowd of 12,085 at the Mandalay Bay Event Center didn't get the free-swinging brawl they wanted in the Lennox Lewis-David Tua main event, there were absolutely no complaints about the blistering semifinal between unbeaten heavyweights Etienne and Clay-Bey, a rock 'em, sock 'em war that earned a standing ovation at the final bell.

From the start, Etienne, better known as "The Black Rhino," rumbled steadily forward, pumping out punches at a rapid clip. He pinned his opponent on the ropes in the second and worked him over for an extended period, but suddenly Clay-Bey exploded off the ropes with a barrage of punches that rocked Etienne and made his legs do an involuntary dance. It was a scenario that repeated itself numerous times throughout the fight and turned what had been expected to be a one-sided fight in Etienne's favor into a see-saw slugfest.

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/ALLSPORT

Clay-Bey spent too much time with his back to the ropes

Clay-Bey, 235, Hartford, Connecticut, found himself glued to the ropes for most of the third, as The Rhino gored him with whistling right uppercuts and thudding hooks to the body. The former U.S. Olympian managed one brief rally, but couldn't take the play away from Etienne, who piled on the punches with both hands.

When he stayed off the ropes and used his legs, as he did during the early part of the fourth round, Clay-Bey was in control. But regardless of whether it was lack of conditioning or just plain stupidity, he couldn't stay off the ropes for long, and Etienne, 220, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, soon had him trapped again, sucking up punishment.

Clay-Bey, 34, took the fifth on THE RING's scorecard by flurrying early and late, even though he inexplicably laid on the ropes for long periods in between. He also got the better of a furious mid-ring exchange in the sixth, when both men traded flush headshots, much to the delight of the fans. The seventh also started well for the underdog, when he came off the ropes with a right that hurt Etienne. A flurry followed, but Clay-Bey couldn't find the punches to finish the job, and was soon back on the receiving end.

PHOTO BY ANTHONY NESTE/HBO

Molina catches Tackie with a left hook

The frantic pace slowed a bit in the eighth and ninth, but even so, it was Etienne, 30, who was doing most of the work and practically all of the scoring. The relentless Rhino still had plenty of gas left in the 10th and came close to stopping Clay-Bey when he pinned him on the ropes yet again and knocked his head back-and-forth with a sickening series of combinations. But just when it looked like referee Jay Nady (USA) would be forced to call a halt, the dead game Clay-Bey mustered the strength to move away and punch back.

The official Las Vegas judges' scores of 99-91 (Al Siciliano), 98-92 (Dalby Shirley), and 97-93 (Duane Ford) that gave a unanimous decision victory didn't really reflect the thrilling nature of the fight. THE RING also saw in The Black Rhino's favor, but by a much closer 96-95 margin.

"This was my toughest fight yet," said Etienne, after running his record to 19-0 (13).

"I'm not worried about it," said Clay-Bey, 12-1 (9), of his first loss. "I felt good and strong. I just didn't let my hands go."

Television: TVKO

Promoters: Main Events, Panix Promotions, America Presents, Lion Promotions

(11-11-00)

Nigel Collins

John-John Molina W 10 Ben Tackie

Las Vegas, Nevada: In another entertaining bout on the Lewis-Tua undercard at Mandalay Bay, two-time former junior lightweight champion Molina upset Tackie via split decision and probably earned himself another title shot.

Tackie, fresh from one-punch knockouts of Roberto Garcia and Fred Pendleton, was thwarted to a large degree by Molina's lateral movement and shifty defense, and was unable to land the sort of fight-ending bomb that had recently transformed him into a title threat. Molina, outpointed by then-IBF junior lightweight champ Garcia in his last title challenge, in January 1999, displayed remarkable bounce in his 35-year-old legs, which, along with his fluid boxing skills and quick hands, carried him to his most impressive victory in several years.

The bout was fought at a brisk pace, and after outboxing Tackie, 139, the first two rounds, Molina, 139½, was hurt by a right to the body in the third. The man from Ghana worked over the Puerto Rican along the ropes, then got the better of a scorching exchange that closed the round.

There was two-way action in practically every round, and at times, especially at the start of the sixth, it seemed that Tackie's strength and harder punches would take over. But Molina's superior boxing, hand speed, and combinations kept him a point or two ahead. Even when Tackie, 27, succeeded in trapping Molina on the ropes, he failed to deliver the kind of pulverizing blows that have become his trademark.

Molina, 52-6 (33), fought his way off the ropes with a brilliant barrage in the eighth that drew applause from the crowd, then engaged Tackie, 21-2 (13), in a prolonged exchange that highlighted the ninth. Going into the 10th, Tackie needed a knockout to win, and although he kept plugging to take the round on all three judges' cards, it wasn't enough to swing the verdict in his favor.

Judge Carol Castellano had it for Tackie, 96-94, but was outvoted by Glenn Trowbridge and Cindy Bartin-Wiens, who both scored it for Molina, 97-93. THE RING also had Molina winning, 97-95.

The referee was Richard Steele (USA).

Television: TVKO

Promoters: Main Events, Panix Promotions, America Presents, Lion Promotions

(11-11-00)

Nigel Collins ■

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New Face

(Continued from page 20)

in New York always recognized him. Someone would recognize Michael, and I'd be stuck with him signing autographs for a crowd of people. I was 11, and 11-year-olds can be impatient. I was always like, *C'mon Mike*. Then there was the time Michael came back to Vancouver and spoke before my whole school at an assembly. I was definitely proud of what he was doing and who he was."

Since his parents were divorced, Olajide would spend weekends with his father, Michael Sr., in New York City, and they would head straight to the gym in Times Square. Michael Sr. would let Tokunbo play around with the speedbag, watch sparring sessions, and hit the heavybag. Even though he was only 11, he became someone his father could depend on for teaching technique. When Michael Sr. was unable to attend to a fighter, he'd send Tokunbo over to give a quick tutorial.

But by the time Tokunbo became a teenager, he began resisting the gym. He wanted free time to do what other teenagers did. He felt his options were limited, that boxing was the only way he could bond with his father. It made boxing more of a chore, up there with taking out the garbage.

"I resented being there," Olajide said. "My father would have to stay on me about staying active. When I was 16, though, that's when I think I really turned a corner and I started to get a little extreme about boxing."

That translated into an unyielding commitment to boxing. Olajide would undergo long workouts and arduous runs around the reservoir in Central Park. Running eight miles two or three times a week became routine. He would do pullups with 80 to 90 pounds strapped to his waist for greater resistance.

"I really felt that if I was going to do this, I wanted to be the best," Olajide said. "My father really expressed disappointment in my lack of progress at the time, and I wanted to show my father I was serious about this. It didn't take that long before he realized the commitment I was willing to give. To some degree, I felt I had to be on my own. I imposed a lot of pressure on myself."

At the same time, in the late-'80s, Michael Jr. had a falling out with Michael Sr. Michael and his father didn't talk for a few years. Consequently, Tokunbo didn't have much contact with his brother either.

When Olajide was 20, he too parted ways with his father.

"I felt my father was trying to impose his will on me and trying to keep me as a child," Olajide said. "He wanted to control my life in every aspect. If my father wasn't talking to Michael, that meant I couldn't. I had some resentful feelings toward Michael, because I felt like he abandoned

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Olajide looks down on fallen foe Brad Ekstam

me. But I started to feel what Michael went through.

"When I was a teenager, me and my father had a very close relationship, and I still love my father, but I really don't agree with the practice of fathers working with their sons in the corner or training them. I don't agree that fathers should be living through their sons. At some point, people have to branch out and do their own things."

One of the many things unique about Olajide is that boxing is his main priority, but just one of a number of his passions. He is also accomplished with the trumpet, an instrument he picked up four years ago. He was attending Hunter College working toward a degree in music when boxing became his number-one priority.

His love for music comes from his mother, Kokumo, a classical pianist. But when Olajide began boxing professionally, his mother opposed the move. She always felt that her son was capable of doing so much more, yet has come to reluctantly accept his choice to step into the ring and risk his lips.

Olajide practices playing the trumpet routinely from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., then trains from 3 to 6 p.m. He's never taken a stiff shot to his lips, but did receive a butt from Bertrand Tchandjeu in his ninth fight that opened an abrasion where he holds the mouthpiece. He says he is still developing as a trumpet player, and may be further along as a boxer.

"Tokunbo can fight," said veteran boxing writer Jeff Jowett. "I've seen him in several prelims, and he has a good pair of hands. He's quick and he mixes his punches well. From what I've seen, he has no glaring, obvious flaws. At this stage of the game, he looks real good.

"I've seen Michael fight and I've seen Tokunbo, and Michael was somewhat taller and rangier; this kid is a little more improvisational, a little looser. I don't think they have too many similarities. This kid punches a little better than his brother—not that Michael couldn't punch. I definitely see him being a contender."

Michael, who has only missed one of Tokunbo's bouts, obviously has a very biased eye when it comes to his brother. He's so passionate, in fact, that he's never asked to hold the camcorder when Tokunbo's fighting.

"I get so excited, all anyone would see is the ceiling and the floor, I jump around so much," Michael said, laughing. "Tokunbo has that kind of ability to be a great fighter. He has the kind of ability to be a Sugar Ray Leonard, Muhammad Ali. He's more competitive at 10-0 than I was at 23-0. I just wasn't into it as much. I used to think of other things when I was in the ring; he doesn't. The ability to adjust, however, is a great thing. That's something he'll learn through experience. The good thing about Tokunbo is that he may never get that experience, that's how great he is."

And as for the pressure of living up to his brother's accomplishments …

"I believe in the art of right contact," Tokunbo said. "What it says is you can't be negatively affected by any set of circumstances. When the pressure is on, that's the time for me to really shine. I always felt pressure as being very helpful. I've used it to better myself." ■

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— Sports Illustrated (May 15, 2000)

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Boxing Business

(Continued from page 43)

Warren—allegedly paid from $3-million to $5-million not to press charges—dismissed suggestions he had served as an impromptu sparring partner, but he sported a reddened eye on fight night and said he didn't think Tyson would be fighting again on Warren's side of the Atlantic Ocean.

Little wonder, then, that Tyson's only bout in the U.S. also proved stranger than fiction. Paired against "The Foul Pole," Andrew Golota, in Auburn Hills, Michigan, Tyson seemingly was on his way to a conventional stoppage when Golota resigned from the match after two rounds, storming out of the ring in supposed protest of Tyson headbutts for which referee Frank Garza failed to penalize him.

Tyson's penchant for controversy, which once lured in fans like a carnival sideshow operator's pitch, seems to be attracting fewer and fewer suckers: His PPV faceoff with Golota had sales of only 450,000, or half of what had been projected.

Jones? The light heavyweight champ, the only man to currently hold WBC, WBA, and IBF titles, appeared to be on cruise control in his three 2000 appearances, easily outpointing David Telesco in New York's Radio City Music Hall, stopping punching bag Richard Hall in 11 rounds in Indianapolis, and struggling against southpaw Eric Harding in New Orleans before Harding, citing an injured left biceps, declined to come out for the 11th round. Jones-Harding, perhaps ill-advisedly, was on PPV and had mediocre sales of roughly 100,000.

De La Hoya? After fighting courageously and well in a split-decision loss to Mosley, "The Golden Boy" hinted at retirement and, in fact, didn't fight again the rest of the year. He instead chose to devote his energies to hyping his debut album as a Latino pop singer and firing his longtime promoter, Bob Arum, and trainer, Robert Alcazar. Arum vowed not to take his ouster quietly, setting the stage for a protracted court battle that could leave De La Hoya singing on the sideline until a legal resolution is achieved.

Trinidad? In the ring he enjoyed much success, overcoming a third-round knockdown in his pay-per-view bout with David

PHOTO BY STEVE MATTEO/HBO

Lightweight Emanuel Burton walks to the ring surrounded by "The Knockouts" on a recent edition of HBO's* KO Nation. *The youth-oriented boxing show hasn't done well in the ratings, and is being moved from an afternoon time slot to a late-night position as a result.

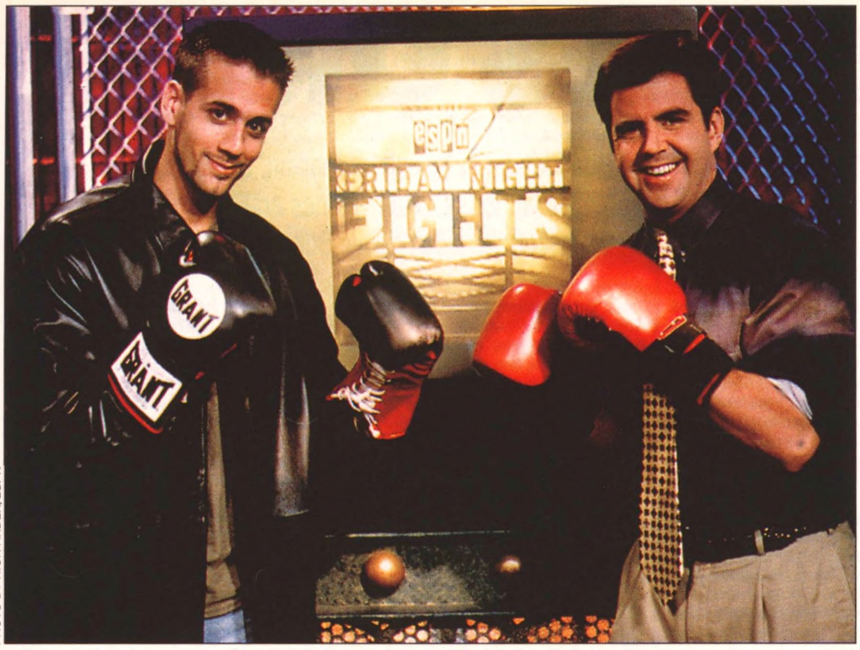

PHOTO BY RICH ARDEN/ESPN

One good sign for boxing is that the success of* Friday Night Fights *has led ESPN2 to add a Tuesday night boxing program starting in the summer of 2001.

Reid to register four knockdowns of his own and win the WBA super welterweight title on a unanimous decision. He also pounded Mamadou Thiam's face lopsided in his first 154-pound defense, which ended in a third-round TKO, and capped off his exceptional year with a thrilling 12th-round knockout of Fernando Vargas to add the IBF junior middleweight title. But Tito's conquest of Reid was something less than a smash on PPV, with sales of 250,000.

The slide in PPV numbers has to concern those whose business it is to provide product for the insatiable TV monster. Consider Lewis' last four PPV outings: 1.2 million sales for his first fight with Holyfield; 850,000 for the rematch; 770,000 combined for Grant and Tua.

Perhaps Lewis-Tyson will brake the skid, or perhaps it will be someone like Mosley, who came back from his rousing victory over De La Hoya to hammer out Antonio Diaz in six rounds in The Theater at Madison Square Garden.

"Right now there's nobody generating more heat in our building than Shane Mosley," said Kery Davis, senior vice president of programming for HBO Sports. "We recognize that. We want to capitalize on that. We want to get Shane Mosley's star as high as we can get it."

Somebody's star had best ascend as high as it can as fast as it can, because boxing—which can provide fans with fare as wonderful as Erik Morales' rousing split decision (yes, it was controversial) over Marco Antonio Barrera—needs a sign that its pulse is strengthening.

For every seeming positive—the launch of a third HBO boxing series, the youth-oriented *KO Nation*, to augment *World Championship Boxing* and *Boxing After Dark*—there is a corresponding negative. Only six months after it debuted with Clifford Etienne's exciting points win over Lamon Brewster, *KO Nation* was readying for a move from afternoon to late night in an attempt to bolster viewership.

"We're still tweaking the show," Davis said. "Our research shows that young people are not in front of their TVs in the afternoon. We're not happy with the ratings. We're especially not happy with not reaching the younger demographics. Our highest-rated shows have been the late-night replays."

ESPN2, meanwhile, is plotting a second night of boxing—on Tuesdays—to augment its regular *Friday Night Fights* series, which has to rate as a plus. Then again, with the exception of a handful of gold medal bouts, televised Olympic coverage of boxing was restricted to CNBC, an obvious minus. And no U.S. Olympian won a gold for the first time since 1948.

Say, does anyone know if Tiger Woods knows how to hook off the jab? ■

Bernard Fernandez covers boxing for the Philadelphia Daily News and is a regular contributor to this magazine.

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Oct. 1983: Is Larry Holmes Finished? Color Pinup: Greg Page. Interview: Marvis Frazier. Also: Marvin Hagler, Bobby Chacon, Jack Dempsey.

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Nov. 1984: Thomas Hearns: "Hagler Is Shakin' Like A Leaf On A Tree!" Color Pinup: Tim Witherspoon. Interview: Livingstone Bramble. Also: Rosario-Davis, Marlon Starling.

Jan. 1985: The Wide-Open Heavyweight Division: Who Will Take Control? Color Pinup: Bill Costello. Interview: Tyrone Crawley. Also: Harry Arroyo, Curry-Pryor, Barry McGuigan.

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Aug. 1988: Tyson-Spinks: KO's Fearless Forecast Of Superfight '88. Color Pinup: Buddy McGirt. Interview: Matthew Hilton. Also: Lockridge-Knight, Evander Holyfield, Lloyd Honeyghan.

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Sept. 1989: "I Beat Up Tyson Before, I'll Do It Again," by Carl Williams. Color Pinup: Michael Nunn. Also: Chavez-Mayweather, Brian Mitchell, Marv Albert.

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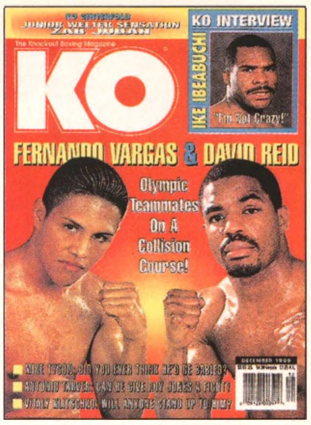

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WORLDWIDE RATINGS

The ratings of the three major governing bodies recognized by The Ring are supplied by the organizations themselves. They are updated on these pages as soon as they are made available to us. In this issue, the WBA ratings were compiled as of September 2000, the WBC as of October 2000, and the IBF as of October 2000.

HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Lennox Lewis (GB)	C	–	C
Evander Holyfield (USA)	–	C	–
David Tua (NZ)	1	4	1
Mike Tyson (USA)	2	6	10
Kirk Johnson (CAN)	3	–	6
Larry Donald (USA)	4	7	3
Vitaly Klitschko (UKR)	5	9	–
John Ruiz (USA)	6	–	–
Clifford Etienne (USA)	7	–	–
Henry Akinwande (GB)	8	10	–
Lance Whitaker (USA)	9	–	–
Vaughn Bean (USA)	10	12	–
Vacant	–	1	2
Wladimir Klitschko (UKR)	–	2	7
Oleg Maskaev (UKR)	15	3	12
John Ruiz (USA)	–	5	8
Kirk Johnson (CAN)	–	8	–
Danell Nicholson (USA)	16	–	4
Hasim Rahman (USA)	14	–	5
Michael Grant (USA)	12	–	9

CRUISERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Juan Carlos Gomez (CUBA)	C	–	–
Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)	–	C	–
Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)	–	–	C
Marcelo Dominguez (ARG)	1	4	5
Wayne Braithwaite (GUY)	2	–	9
Carl Thompson (GB)	3	5	3
Torsten May (GER)	4	8	2
Louis Azille (DR)	5	10	8
Jorge Castro (ARG)	6	–	–
Ezra Sellars (USA)	7	12	7
Arthur Williams (USA)	8	6	4
Alex Gonzalez (PR)	9	11	–
Dale Brown (CAN)	10	–	–
Virgil Hill (USA)	–	1	11
James Toney (USA)	11	2	6
Alexander Gurov (UKR)	16	3	–
Valery Vikhor (LAT)	–	7	–
Andre Purlette (GUY)	–	9	–
Alex Gonzales (USA)	–	–	1
William Guthrie (USA)	23	–	10

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Roy Jones (USA)	C	C	C
Michael Nunn (USA)	1	–	–
Clinton Woods (GB)	2	7	4
Yawe Davis (ITA)	3	–	–
Eric Harding (USA)	4	–	3
Thomas Ulrich (GER)	5	–	–
David Telesco (USA)	6	4	11
Glenn Kelly (AUSTRL)	7	5	1
Reggie Johnson (USA)	8	10	12
Jean-Marc Mormerck (FRA)	9	–	–
Chris Johnson (CAN)	10	–	–
Lou Del Valle (USA)	–	1	–
Frank Liles (USA)	–	2	–
Derrick Harmon (USA)	11	3	8
Richard Hall (USA)	18	6	–
Jorge Castro (ARG)	–	8	–
Julio Gonzalez (USA)	12	9	–
Vacant	–	–	2
Antonio Tarver (USA)	14	–	5
Lincoln Carter (USA)	13	12	6
Will Taylor (USA)	–	–	7
Billy Lewis (USA)	–	–	9
Lee Osie (SPA)	22	–	10

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Dingaan Thobela (SA)	C	–	–
Bruno Girard (FRA)	–	C	–
Sven Ottke (GER)	–	–	C
Eric Lucas (CAN)	1	–	–
Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)	2	1	4
Glenn Catley (GB)	3	–	–
Markus Beyer (GER)	4	–	11
Mario Velt (GER)	5	3	10
Dana Rosenblatt (USA)	6	2	–
Stephane Ouellet (CAN)	7	–	–
Byron Mitchell (USA)	8	4	–
Guy Waters (AUSTRL)	9	–	6
Thomas Tate (USA)	10	8	3
Richie Woodhall (GB)	–	5	–
Manuel Siacca (PR)	–	6	–
Mike Makata (NZ)	–	7	–
Mads Larsen (DEN)	11	9	–
David Starie (GB)	–	10	–
James Butler (USA)	16	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Charles Brewer (USA)	–	11	5
Syd Vanderpool (CAN)	–	–	7
Guillermo Jones (PAN)	–	–	8
Willie McIntyre (USA)	23	–	9

MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Keith Holmes (USA)	C	–	–
William Joppy (USA)	–	C	–
Bernard Hopkins (USA)	–	–	C
Erland Betare (FRA)	1	–	–
David Reid (USA)	2	2	–
Howard Eastman (GB)	3	1	6
Robert McCracken (GB)	4	–	–
Ali Ennebati (FRA)	5	–	9
Kevin Palmer (USA)	6	–	–
Carl Daniels (USA)	7	–	4
Guillermo Jones (PAN)	8	3	–
Brian Barbosa (USA)	9	–	3
Jerry Elliott (NIG)	10	–	–
Antwun Echols (USA)	–	4	–
Darren Obah (AUSTRL)	–	5	–
Julio Cesar Green (DR)	–	6	–
Rito Ruvalcaba (MEX)	–	7	–
Hassine Cherifi (FRA)	–	8	11
Lonnie Bradley (USA)	–	9	–
Jonathan Reid (USA)	21	10	–
Antwun Echols (USA)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Stephane Ouellet (CAN)	–	–	5
Santos Cardona (PR)	–	–	7
Armand Krajnc (SLV)	–	–	8
Lansana Djallo (JUI)	–	–	10

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Francisco Castillejo (SPA)	C	–	–
Felix Trinidad (PR)	–	C	–
Fernando Vargas (USA)	–	–	C
Roman Karmazin (RUS)	1	6	–
Winky Wright (USA)	2	3	1
Kevin Kelly (USA)	3	7	–
J.C. Candelo (COL)	4	–	12
Alfred Ankamah (GHA)	5	–	–
Fitz Vanderpool (CAN)	6	–	–
Nicolas Cervera (COL)	7	–	–
Quirino Garcia (MEX)	8	–	–
Tony Marshall (USA)	9	–	–
Akira Ohigashi (JAP)	10	12	–
Vacant	–	1	–
Jose Flores (MEX)	12	2	4
Carl Daniels (USA)	–	4	–
Ike Quartey (GHA)	–	5	9
Julio Cesar Vazquez (ARG)	–	8	–
Ricardo Mayorga (NIC)	28	9	–
Mamadou Thiam (FRA)	–	10	–
Robert Frazier (USA)	–	–	2
Bronco McKart (USA)	14	–	3
Ross Thompson (USA)	–	–	5
Emmett Linton (USA)	–	11	6
Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)	29	–	7
Evans Ashira (DEN)	–	–	8
Alex Bunema (USA)	–	–	10

WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Shane Mosley (USA)	C	–	–
Vacant	–	C	C
Oscar De La Hoya (USA)	1	2	–
Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)	2	7	4
Alessandro Duran (ITA)	3	10	–
Jose Luis Cruz (MEX)	4	–	–
Kofi Jantuah (GHA)	5	–	10
Miguel Angel Gonzalez (MEX)	6	–	–
Carlos Baldomir (ARG)	7	9	–
Danny Perez (USA)	8	12	–
Oba Carr (USA)	9	6	3
Ike Quartey (GHA)	10	–	–
Andrew Lewis (GUY)	23	1	–
Michael Trabant (GERE)	18	3	–
Arturo Gatti (USA)	–	4	12
Thomas Damgaard (DEN)	12	5	–
Frank Olsen (DEN)	–	8	5
Raul Frank (USA)	–	–	1
Vernon Forrest (USA)	–	–	2
Steve Roberts (GB)	–	–	6
Michele Piccirillo (ITA)	11	–	7
Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)	21	–	8
Charles Murray (USA)	–	–	9

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)	C	–	–
Sharmba Mitchell (USA)	–	C	–

Zab Judah (USA)	–	–	C
Oktay Urkal (TUR)	1	3	8
Hector Camacho Jr (PR)	2	1	–
Diobelis Hurtado (CUB)	3	2	–
Arturo Gatti (CAN)	4	–	–
Gianluca Branco (ITA)	5	–	–
Ricky Quiles (USA)	6	–	–
Mikhail Krivolapov (RUS)	7	–	–
Ben Tackie (GHA)	8	8	–
Ray Oliveira (USA)	9	–	6
Vince Phillips (USA)	10	–	–
Antonio Diaz (USA)	15	4	–
Miguel Angel Gonzalez (MEX)	–	5	–
Khalid Rahilou (FRA)	–	6	–
John-John Molina (PR)	–	7	–
Gabriel Mapuoka (FRA)	11	9	7
Ricky Hatton (GB)	16	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Allan Vester (DEN)	17	–	3
George Scott (SWE)	26	–	4
Terronn Millett (USA)	–	–	5
Reggie Green (USA)	–	–	9
DeMarcus Corley (USA)	29	–	10

LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Jose Luis Castillo (MEX)	C	–	–
Takanori Hatakeyama (JAP)	–	C	–
Paul Spadafora (USA)	–	–	C
Cesar Bazan (MEX)	1	–	8
Steve Johnston (USA)	2	–	3
Julien Lorcy (FRA)	3	2	4
Rick Yoshimura (JAP)	4	4	–
Lawrence Ngobeni (SA)	5	–	–
Lovemore Ndou (SA)	6	–	–
Thembinkosi Ntyenene (SA)	7	–	–
Diego Corrales (USA)	8	–	–
Alberto Sicurella (ARG)	9	3	–
Sungho Yuh (KOR)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	–
Gilbert Serrano (VEN)	–	5	–
Stefano Zoff (ITA)	13	6	–
Jean-Baptiste Mendy (FRA)	16	7	–
Raul Balbi (ARG)	–	8	–
Oscar Garcia Cano (SPA)	21	9	–
Edson Xuxa Nascimento (BRA)	23	10	11
Billy Irwin (CAN)	–	–	1
Joel Perez (USA)	–	–	2
Juan Gomez-Trinidad (PR)	–	12	5
Hector Camacho Jr. (USA)	–	–	6
Guillermo Mosquera (COL)	–	–	7
Juan Lazcano (USA)	11	–	9
Victoriano Damian Sosa (DR)	15	–	10

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Floyd Mayweather (USA)	C	–	–
Joel Casamayor (CUB)	–	C	–
Vacant	–	1	C
Jesus Chavez (USA)	1	11	7
Sirimongkol Singmanassuk (THAI)	2	–	–
Kengo Nagashima (JAP)	3	–	–
Tiger Ari (PHIL)	4	–	–
Goyo Vargas (MEX)	5	–	–
Carlos Hernandez (EL SALV)	6	–	–
Michael Gomez (GB)	7	–	–
Tontcho Tontchev (BUL)	8	4	11
Koji Arisawa (JAP)	9	–	–
Boris Sinitsin (RUS)	10	–	–
Lakva Sim (MON)	–	2	–
Yodsanan Nanthachai (THAI)	–	3	–
Jongkwon Baek (KOR)	–	5	–
Luis Navarro (USA)	15	6	10
Steve Forbes (USA)	26	7	2
Robert Garcia (USA)	14	8	6
Jorge Barrios (ARG)	–	9	–
Dennis Holbaek (DEN)	30	10	–
John Brown (USA)	–	–	1
Raul Balbi (ARG)	–	–	3
Carlos Hernandez (USA)	–	–	4
Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)	–	–	5
David Santos (USA)	–	–	8
Juan Arias (USA)	–	–	9

FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Guty Espadas (MEX)	C	–	–
Derrick Gainer (USA)	–	C	–
Paul Ingle (GB)	–	–	C
Injin Chi (KOR)	1	–	–
Tony Wehbee (AUS)	2	–	8
Istvan Kovacs (HUN)	3	6	–
Luisito Espinosa (PHIL)	4	–	–
Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)	5	4	–
Scott Harrison (GB)	6	–	–
Philip Ndou (SA)	7	5	–
Manuel Calvo (SPA)	8	–	–
Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)	9	–	–
Edgar Barcenas (MEX)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	–
Victor Polo (COL)	–	2	4
Angel Vasquez (PR)	–	3	3
Lewis Woods (US)	–	7	–
Fred Norwood (USA)	–	8	–
Pablo Chacon (ARG)	–	9	–
Kengo Nagashima (JAP)	–	10	–
Manuel Medina (MEX)	16	–	1
Mbulelo Botile (SA)	–	–	2
Naseem Hamed (GB)	–	–	5
David Toledo (USA)	–	–	6
Oscar Larios (MEX)	–	–	7
Augie Sanchez (USA)	–	–	9
Frankie Toledo (USA)	–	–	10

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Willie Jorrin (USA)	C	–	–
Clarence Adams (USA)	–	C	–
Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)	–	–	C
Oscar Larios (MEX)	1	–	–
Michael Brodie (GB)	2	12	8
Sergei Devakov (UKR)	3	–	3
Manny Pacquaio (PHIL)	4	–	4
Enrique Sanchez (MEX)	5	8	5
Cesar Soto (MEX)	6	–	–
Yongjin Cho (KOR)	7	–	–
Israel Vazquez (MEX)	8	–	7
Agapito Sanchez (DR)	9	–	11
Hector Julia Avila (DR)	10	–	9
Vacant	–	1	1
Yobert Ortega (VEN)	–	2	–
Kozo Ishii (JAP)	–	3	–
Jose Rojas (VEN)	25	4	–
Bugiarso (INDO)	–	5	–
Nestor Garza (MEX)	–	6	–
Vladislav Antonov (RUS)	19	7	–
Osamu Sato (JAP)	13	9	–
Eduardo Alvarez (ARG)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	2
F. Rakkiatgym (INDO)	–	–	6
Arnel Barotillo (AUSTRL)	27	–	10

BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Veerapol Sahaprom (THAI)	C	–	–
Paul Ayala (USA)	–	C	–
Tim Austin (USA)	–	–	C
Ricardo Barajas (MEX)	1	–	–
Adan Vargas (MEX)	2	6	3
Cuauhtemoc Gomez (MEX)	3	4	–
Hugo Dianzo (MEX)	4	–	–
Jess Maca (PHIL)	5	–	–
Rafael Marquez (MEX)	6	8	9
Alejandro Estrada (MEX)	7	–	–
Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)	8	–	–
Genaro Garcia (USA)	9	11	–
Luigi Castiglione (ITA)	10	–	8
Vacant	–	1	2
Sahoiu Sithchai Condo (THAI)	–	2	–
Danny Romero (USA)	–	3	5
Fernando Montiel (MEX)	–	5	–
Johnny Bredahl (DEN)	12	7	–
Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)	–	9	–
Jorge Eliecer Julio (COL)	–	10	–
Jesus Perez (COL)	–	–	1
Pete Frissina (USA)	–	–	4
Arthur Johnson (USA)	–	–	6
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	–	–	7
Steve Dotse (GHA)	–	–	10

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Masanori Tokuyama (JAP)	C	–	–
Hideki Todaka (JAP)	–	C	–
Felix Machado (VEN)	–	–	C
Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)	1	–	–
In Joo Cho (KOR)	2	–	–
Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)	3	–	–
Fernando Montiel (MEX)	4	–	–
Akihigo Nago (JAP)	5	6	–
Kazuhiro Ryuko (JAP)	6	–	–
Jose Angel Beranza (MEX)	7	–	–
Reynaldo Hurtado (COL)	8	–	–
Luis Bolanos (COL)	9	8	7
Vernie Torres (USA)	10	9	6
Leo Gamez (VEN)	–	1	–
Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	–	2	5
Jesus Rojas (VEN)	–	3	3
Edison Torres (VEN)	–	4	–
Jesper Jensen (DEN)	–	5	–
Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)	–	7	–
Diego Morales (MEX)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Adonis Rivas (NIC)	–	–	4
Mauricio Pastrana (COL)	11	–	8
Julio Gamboa (NIC)	–	–	9
Everardo Morales (MEX)	–	–	10

FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Malcolm Tunacao (PHIL)	C	–	–
Eric Morel (USA)	–	C	–
Irene Pacheco (COL)	–	–	C
Chatchai Sasakul (THAI)	1	–	–
Alex Ali Baba (GHA)	2	–	12
Celes Kobayashi (JAP)	3	–	–
David Guerault (FRA)	4	5	1
Mike Trejo (USA)	5	6	–
Gabriel Mira (MEX)	6	–	–
Medgoen Singsurat (THAI)	7	–	–
Gerson Guerrero (MEX)	8	–	–
Hiroshi Nakano (JAP)	9	–	–
Alejandro Montiel (MEX)	10	10	5
Vacant	–	1	2
Denkaosaen Kaowitch (THAI)	–	2	–
Panieng Okuda (THAI)	–	3	–
Sornpichai Kratchingdaeng (THAI)	–	4	–
Gilberto Gonzalez (VEN)	–	7	–
Mzukisi Sikali (SA)	29	8	–
Jose Lopez (VEN)	–	9	–
Hawk Makepula (SA)	–	–	3
Zoltan Lunka (TUR)	19	–	4
Shiro Yahiro (JAP)	–	–	6
Martin Castillo (MEX)	17	–	7
Edicson Torres (PAN)	–	–	8
Ferid Ben Jeddou (TUN)	–	–	9
Pedro Pena (USA)	–	–	10

JR. FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Yosam Choi (KOR)	C	–	–
Bebis Mendoza (COL)	–	C	–
Ricardo Lopez (MEX)	–	–	C
Jorge Arce (MEX)	1	6	11
Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)	2	8	–
Hidenobu Honda (JAP)	3	2	–
Panieng Sasiprabha (THAI)	4	–	–
Takayuki Korogi (JAP)	5	–	–
Eric Ortiz (MEX)	6	–	–
Juanito Rubillar (PHIL)	7	–	–
Pongsaklek Wonjongkam (THAI)	8	–	–
Kohki Tanaka (JAP)	9	11	–
Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)	10	–	–
Pichitnoi C. Siriwat (THAI)	–	1	–
Yura Dimas (MON)	17	3	–
Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)	–	4	–
Pongsaklek Nakornton (THAI)	–	5	–
Masibulele Makepula (SA)	–	7	–
Noel Arambulet (VEN)	–	9	–
Nelson Dieppa (DR)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Ratanapol Sor Vorapin (THAI)	–	–	3
Zolani Petelo (SA)	–	–	4
Everardo Morales (MEX)	–	–	5
Pongsaklek Sithkanongsak (THAI)	–	–	6
Alex Sanchez (PR)	–	–	7
Will Grigsby (USA)	–	–	8
Taekil Lee (KOR)	–	–	9
Domingo Guillen (DR)	–	–	10

STRAWWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Jose Antonio Aguirre (MEX)	C	–	–
Joma Gamboa (PHIL)	–	C	–
Zolani Petelo (SA)	–	–	C
Wandee Chor Chareon (THAI)	1	–	8
Yasuo Tokimitsu (JAP)	2	–	9
Juan Keb Baas (MEX)	3	–	–
Erdene Chuluun (MON)	4	–	–
Makoto Suzuki (JAP)	5	10	–
Jaewon Kim (KOR)	6	–	–
Keitaro Hoshino (JAP)	7	12	–
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	8	11	–
Khulile Makeba (SA)	9	–	–
Hiroshi Nakajima (JAP)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	2
Chana Porpaoin (THAI)	–	2	–
Daniel Reyes (COL)	–	3	1
Jose Garcia (COL)	–	4	–
Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)	14	5	–
Songkram Porpaoin (THAI)	–	6	–
Satoru Abe (JAP)	19	7	–
Udomdet Porpaoin (THAI)	–	8	–
Fasan Pongsawan (THAI)	–	9	–
Rocky Palma (JAP)	–	–	3
Kermin Guardia (COL)	–	–	4
Hiroshi Nakajima (JAP)	–	–	5
Rocky Lim (TWN)	–	–	6
Alberto Rossel (PERU)	–	–	7
Surachai Saengmorokot (THAI)	–	–	10

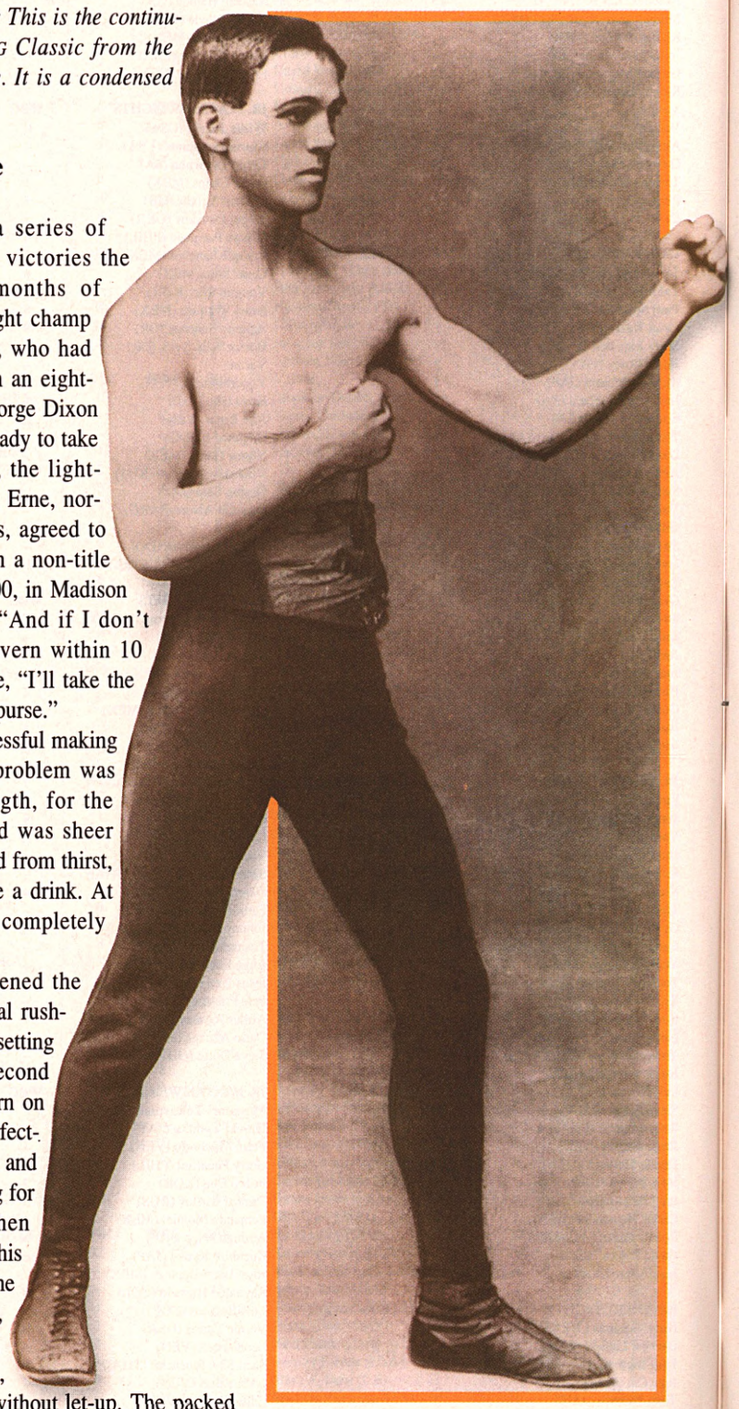
CLASSIC

From THE RING, January 1979

TERRIBLE TERRY McGOVERN, PART II

(Editor's Note: This is the continuation of THE RING Classic from the March 2001 issue. It is a condensed version.)

By Sam Andre



Following a series of impressive victories the first six months of 1900, featherweight champ Terry McGovern, who had won the title with an eight-round kayo of George Dixon in January, was ready to take on Frankie Erne, the lightweight champion. Erne, normally 133 pounds, agreed to come in at 128 in a non-title bout, July 16, 1900, in Madison Square Garden. "And if I don't knock out McGovern within 10 rounds," said Erne, "I'll take the loser's end of the purse."

Erne was successful making the weight. His problem was conserving strength, for the drying out period was sheer agony. He suffered from thirst, but dared not take a drink. At ringside, he was completely dried out.

McGovern opened the bout with his usual rushing tactics. Erne, setting himself for the second rush, hit McGovern on the chin with a perfectly timed left hook and sent him sprawling for a nine-count. When McGovern got to his feet, he rushed Erne all over the ring, breaking his nose, cutting his lips, and beating him without let-up. The packed house went wild in the second round as "Terrible Terry" continued the onslaught. Gamely, Erne managed to finish the round.

Terry McGovern was a world champion by the time he reached 19 and one of the top pound-for-pound fighters at the turn of the century. He just had one serious drawback: a bad temper.

McGovern leaped from his corner in the third and, slipping past Erne's left jab, threw a flurry of blows to the stomach and head. Erne was doubled over and helpless when a right to the head sent him down on all fours. He arose at eight but was floored again. As he staggered to his feet, his handlers hurled a sponge into the ring, stopping the slaughter at 2:08 of the round. The victory brought McGovern $19,500, with Erne getting the loser's share, $6,500.

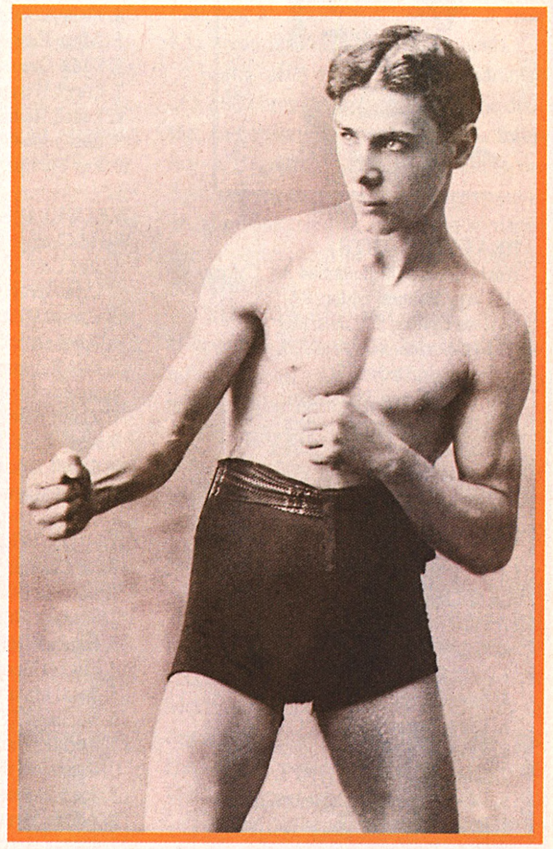
After two more wins, McGovern ended 1900 on December 13 with a questionable two-round knockout over Joe Gans, "The Old Master," in Chicago. Gans had quit to Erne in the 12th round of a title match on March 23 that year.

According to an agreement, Gans had to scale 133 pounds against McGovern's 124. Failing to make the weight, Gans would have to forfeit half his purse. The second agreement was for Gans to knock out McGovern in order to win.

When Joe weighed in 1¼ pounds overweight, McGovern's manager assured Gans he would waive the forfeit money if McGovern won. McGovern swarmed all over his opponent in the first round, throwing bombs to the body and jaw that had Gans groggy at the bell. Gans possessed a left that could be thrown with accurate force, yet he merely pawed with it in the second round. He took Terrible Terry's blows and did nothing but back away, wearing a scared look on his face.

Knocked down for the second time, Gans rolled over face down and was counted out before 17,000 fight fans. When the referee ended the count, Gans got up and walked to his corner. Instantly, the ringside sports writers denounced the bout as a fake. Chicago newspapers the next day pointed out that the public had been swindled and demanded an investigation. The referee was also given a going-over for failing to stop the bout and call all bets off.

Nat Fleischer's reaction, printed in the McGovern booklet, absolves Terrible Terry of having been part of the fake fight: "Whether McGovern was aware that Gans intended to lie down, was never proved," states Fleischer. "The chances are he was just told to go in and fight, without knowing anything about the conspiracy. His handlers knew all about it, as did the bunch behind Gans. McGovern wouldn't have been surprised at an easy victory, believing in himself as he did. One remembers how he offered to fight Erne at 135 pounds. He wouldn't have wanted Gans or anyone else to take a dive for him, if left to his own inclinations."



McGovern took on lightweight champ Frank Erne (pictured) in a non-title bout at Madison Square Garden, and defeated him easily in three rounds. By the time McGovern was through with Erne, the lightweight champ was severely bruised and had a broken nose.

Chicago's Mayor Harrison, outraged by the alleged swindle, directed an investigation of the charges. The result ended the issuing of permits to promoters. Boxing in Chicago was killed for a number of years.

Now it's 1901 and McGovern is at the height of his career and waiting to celebrate his 21st birthday, March 9, then leave for San Francisco to defend his title against "The Omaha Kid" Oscar Gardner and Aurelio Herrera. Nobody in his right mind could possibly foresee this would be the beginning of the end for Terrible Terry.

In the first battle with Gardner (March 9, 1900), The Kid lashed out with a left hook that sent McGovern flat on his back. At the count of eight, McGovern's glazed eyes saw Gardner standing above him ready to deliver a blow as soon as his knee came off the canvas.

McGovern shifted forward and grabbed Oscar's leg, using it to climb upward. Oscar tried to shake him loose while complaining to referee Charlie White. When White halted proceedings and lectured McGovern against holding, it gave McGovern the needed time to recuperate. Gardner always insisted that Terrible Terry was given a long count of 30 seconds, saving him from a knockout.

In the second round, Gardner was down five times. In the third, McGovern feinted a right to the head and, when Oscar ducked the phantom blow, Terrible Terry connected with a murderous left hook to the jaw. Half an hour later, Gardner could not recall being in a fight.

THE RING RATINGS, January 1979

Larry Holmes

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Muhammad Ali, Chicago, IL
1. **Larry Holmes**, Easton, PA
2. **Leon Spinks**, St. Louis, MO
3. **Ken Norton**, San Diego, CA
4. **Ron Lyle**, Denver, CO
5. **Jimmy Young**, Philadelphia, PA
6. **Alfredo Evangelista**, Spain
7. **Kallie Knoetze**, South Africa
8. **Gerrie Coetzee**, South Africa
9. **Ossie Ocasio**, Puerto Rico
10. **Domingo D'Elia**, Argentina

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Mike Rossman**, Turnersville, NJ
2. **Mate Parlov**, Yugoslavia
3. **Matt Franklin**, Philadelphia, PA
4. **John Conteh**, England
5. **Yaqui Lopez**, Stockton, CA
6. **Victor Galindez**, Argentina
7. **James Scott**, Rahway, NJ
8. **Vonzell Johnson**, Columbus, OH
9. **Bobby Cassidy**, Long Island, NY
10. **Eddie Gregory**, Brooklyn, NY

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Hugo Corro, Argentina
1. **Marvin Hagler**, Brockton, MA
2. **Vito Antuofermo**, Italy
3. **Ronnie Harris**, Akron, OH
4. **Marcos Geraldo**, Mexico
5. **Mike Colbert**, Portland, OR
6. **Bennie Briscoe**, Philadelphia, PA
7. **Ruby Robles**, Los Angeles, CA
8. **Tony Chiaverini**, Kansas City, MO
9. **Norberto Cabrera**, Argentina
10. **Elihah Makhatini**, South Africa

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Masashi Kudo, Japan
1. **Ayub Kalule**, Uganda
2. **Rocky Mattioli**, Australia
3. **Maurice Hope**, England
4. **Alvin Anderson**, Baltimore, MD
5. **Edgar Ross**, Orlando, FL
6. **Eddie Gazo**, Nicaragua
7. **Frank Wissenbach**, Germany
8. **Loucif Hamani**, Algeria
9. **Rocky Mosley Jr.**, Las Vegas, NV
10. **Ray Phillips**, Dallas, TX

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Carlos Palomino, Mexico
1. **Jose Cuevas**, Mexico
2. **Clyde Gray**, Canada
3. **Harold Weston**, New York, NY
4. **Ray Leonard**, Baltimore, MD
5. **Pete Ranzany**, Sacramento, CA
6. **Johnny Gant**, Washington, D.C.
7. **Randy Shields**, Los Angeles, CA
8. **Andy Price**, Los Angeles, CA
9. **Scott Clark**, Orlando, FL
10. **Floyd Mayweather**, Grand Rapids, MI

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Wilfred Benitez, Puerto Rico
1. **Antonio Cervantes**, Colombia
2. **Saensak Muangsurin**, Thailand
3. **Esteban DeJesus**, Puerto Rico
4. **Miguel Montilla**, Dominican Republic
5. **Saoul Mamby**, New York, NY
6. **Domingo Ayala**, Puerto Rico
7. **Adrian "Nani" Marrera**, Dominican Republic
8. **Joe Kimpauani**, Zaire
9. **Adolfo Viruet**, Phoenix, AZ
10. **Jimmy Heair**, Memphis, TN

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Roberto Duran, Panama
1. **Alfredo Pitalua**, Colombia
2. **Giancarlo Usai**, Italy
3. **Vilomar Fernandez**, Dominican Republic
4. **Claude Noel**, Trinidad
5. **Jim Watt**, Scotland
6. **Johnny Lira**, Las Vegas, NV
7. **Edwin Viruet**, Puerto Rico
8. **Termite Watkins**, Houston, TX
9. **Julio Valdez**, Dominican Republic
10. **Herman Montes**, Los Angeles, CA

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Samuel Serrano, Puerto Rico
1. **Frankie Baltazar**, Los Angeles, CA
2. **Alfredo Escalera**, Puerto Rico
3. **Alexis Arguello**, Nicaragua
4. **Rafael Limon**, Mexico
5. **Arturo Leon**, Phoenix, AZ
6. **Natlio Vezzoli**, Italy
7. **Bobby Chacon**, Los Angeles, CA
8. **Walter Seeley**, Long Island, NY
9. **Juan Malvarez**, Argentina
10. **Ernesto Espana**, Venezuela

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Danny Lopez**, Los Angeles, CA
2. **Wilfredo Gomez**, Puerto Rico
3. **Eusebio Pedroza**, Panama
4. **Ricardo Cardone**, Venezuela
5. **Roberto Gastanon**, Spain
6. **Sean O'Grady**, Oklahoma City, OK
7. **Ruben Castillo**, Bakersfield, CA
8. **Cecilio Lastra**, Spain
9. **Hector Carrasquilla**, Panama
10. **Mike Ayala**, San Antonio, TX

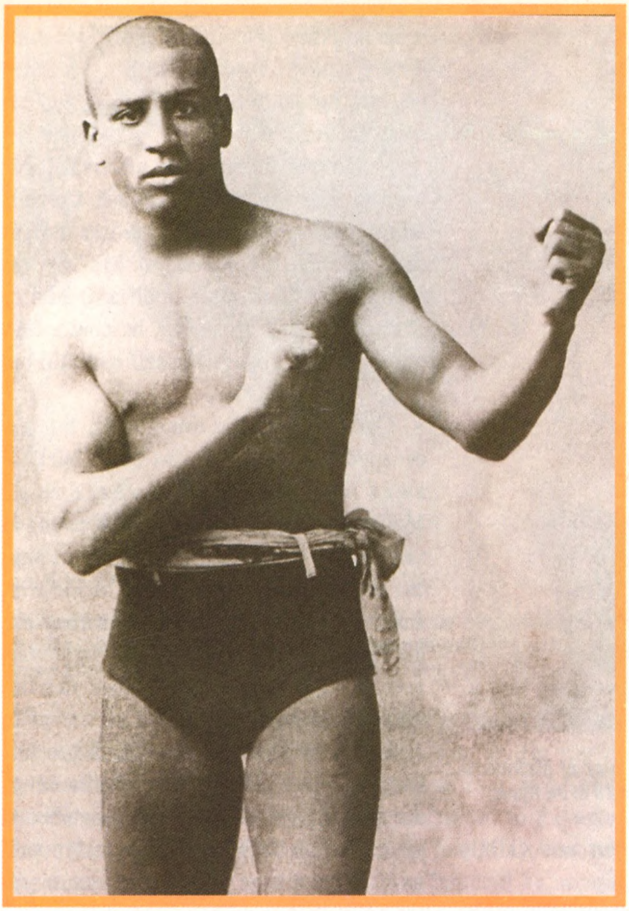
BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champ: Jorge Lujan, Panama
1. **Lupe Pintor**, Mexico
2. **Carlos Zarate**, Mexico
3. **Franco Zurlo**, Italy
4. **Alfonso Zamora**, Mexico
5. **Al Sandoval**, Los Angeles, CA
6. **Richard Rozelle**, Columbia, OH
7. **Alfredo Davila**, Los Angeles, CA
8. **Frank Duarte**, Los Angeles, CA
9. **Roberto Rubaldino**, Mexico
10. **Enrique Sanchez**, Dominican Republic

FLYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Miguel Canto, Mexico
1. **Yoko Gushiken**, Japan
2. **Betulio Gonzalez**, Venezuela
3. **Guty Espadas**, Mexico
4. **Franco Udella**, Italy
5. **Kim Sung**, South Korea
6. **Freddy Castillo**, Mexico
7. **Netrnoi Vorasingh**, Thailand
8. **Jose Ortiz**, Puerto Rico
9. **Charlie Magri**, England
10. **Shoji Oguma**, Japan

In the return bout on April 30, 1901, The Omaha Kid was completely outclassed. He was floored in the first and second rounds and knocked through the ropes as the third round ended. Gardner was down four times in the fourth before McGovern ended it with a right to the belly and left to the jaw.

Terrible Terry got more than he bargained for when he met Herrera on May 29. The hard-punching Mexican had a deceiving style. He would coast along holding his own, but could lash out with a short right that stretched out anyone it hit.

McGovern became aware of the Mexican's style as they felt each other out the first two rounds. In the third, McGovern went to work, unloosening some vicious body blows. There was more of the same in the fourth until Terrible Terry cornered Herrera and drew back his left that was meant for the Mexican's jaw. Suddenly, McGovern staggered back—he had been beaten to the punch. Aurelio's



Joe Gans, "The Old Master," was forced into an agreement with McGovern that stated the only way he could win was if he knocked McGovern out. McGovern won by second-round knockout, but under a heavy cloud of scrutiny by sports writers, who thought the fight was fixed.

deadly right landed flush on the chin and McGovern reeled around, punch drunk. Herrera's handlers screamed at him to keep after Terrible Terry and finish him, but Herrera backed off. Anyone he hit with that right always went down, so Herrera figured, so long as McGovern was on his feet, he wasn't hurt badly. McGovern, however, though in trouble, was rushing in on fighting instinct alone. He landed a hard right to the Mexican's head at the bell.

The rest freshened Terrible Terry. He came out fast for the fifth round and hooked a left to Herrera's stomach followed by a right to the chin that floored him for a nine-count. McGovern then rushed him to the ropes and dropped him again. The game Mexican struggled to his feet, but a left hook to the jaw put him away for good.

From the day McGovern won the featherweight title from Dixon, he was in constant demand for theatrical appearances. He kept busy fighting, but manager Sam Harris signed contracts for Terrible Terry to appear as the hero in such plays as *The Bowery After Dark* and *Terry On The Spot*, in which he beat up the dastardly villain.

The engagements were quite lucrative, totaling over $67,000. After almost two years on the stage, stopping only to fulfill his boxing engagements, McGovern began to grow weary of it. He felt it was hindering his boxing career. When *The Bowery After Dark* completed a short out-of-town showing, McGovern announced his retirement from the stage.

Now Terrible Terry had more time for boxing, but manager Harris had run out of opponents. Except one. He remembered there was a chubby 20-year-old little guy named Billy Rothwell, boxing as Young Corbett.

Corbett was out of Denver, Colorado, and very popular in the midwest where he had built a fairly good reputation with 20 knockouts in 38 bouts between 1898 through 1901. The Denverite had been begging for a title match on the strength of his record in 1901—a decision over Joe Bernstein on January 18, kayos over Eddie Santry, April 12, and Oscar Gardner, June 26, and 10-round decisions over Kid Broad, July 26, and George Dixon, August 16.

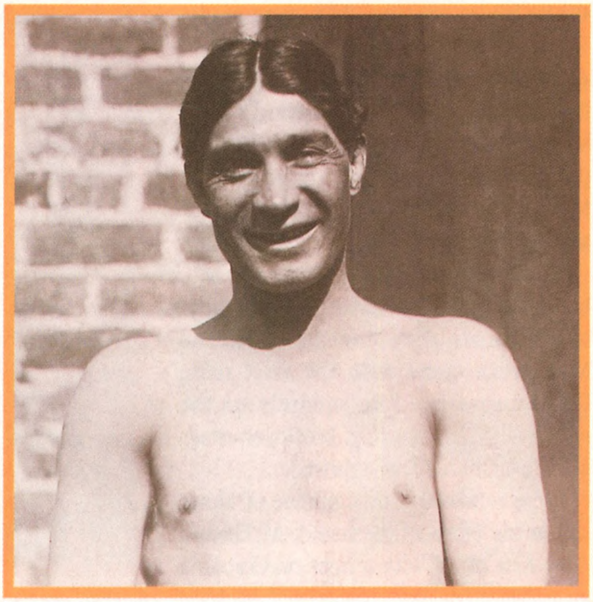
Corbett's record didn't impress McGovern's manager. He envisioned McGovern belting him out for a fat payday, and there was more easy money in bets with Corbett's followers. Harris' reasoning was sound: He had delved further into the Denverite's background and found that Corbett had been knocked out in two rounds by an unknown with the unlikely name of Jack Dempsey in 1900. He kayoed Dempsey in a return, but then was flattened by Benny Yanker. A year later Kid Broad finished him in four rounds.

Harris' offer of expenses and guarantee of $2,000 brought Corbett east on the double, and he settled down to serious training at Hartford, Connecticut, where the fight was to take place. After each training session, he tried to convince visiting sports writers that he would become the new champion.

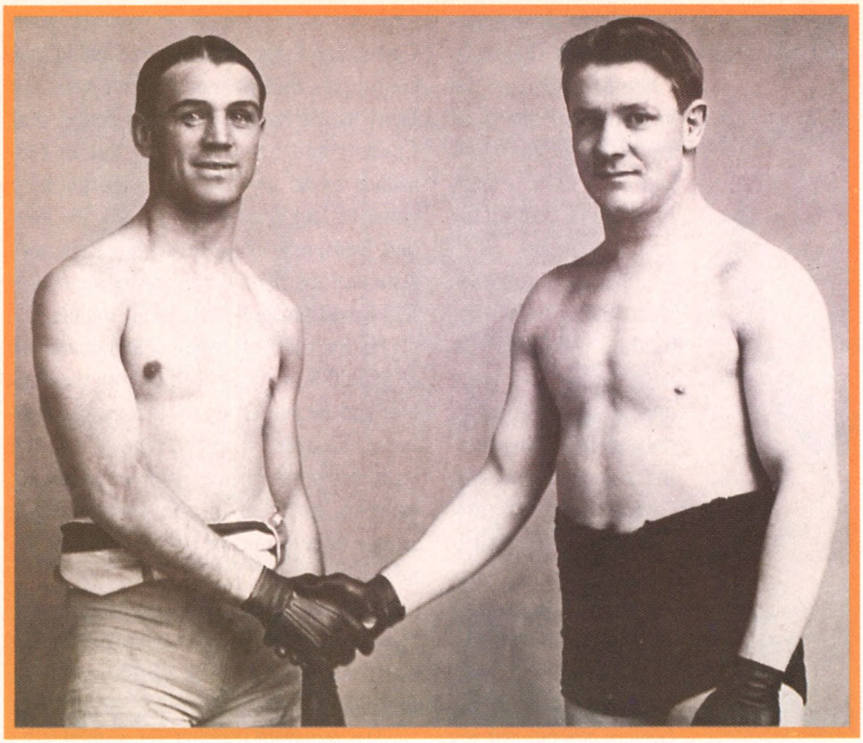
"I know I'll whip McGovern," he said. "I went to San Francisco and watched him box Gardner, and I'm convinced he's made to order for me."

The reporters listened sympathetically. Most had seen McGovern slaughter his opponents, and this one looked like the other victims except he was a little more confident—that was the only difference.

On Thanksgiving afternoon, November 28, the Coliseum at Hartford was packed to the doors and time for the main event arrived. Young Corbett, walking past McGovern's dressing room on his way to the ring, pounded on the door with his fists and called, "Come on, you McGovern, and take your licking."



Terrible Terry received more than he bargained for against Mexican Aurelio Herrera (pictured), who had McGovern in trouble in the fourth and let the battler from New York off the hook. McGovern responded with a knockout in the next round.



McGovern shakes hands with Young Corbett, a chubby 20-year-old with no fear of McGovern. Corbett had built an impressive record in Denver, Colorado, scoring knockouts in 20 of 38 fights.

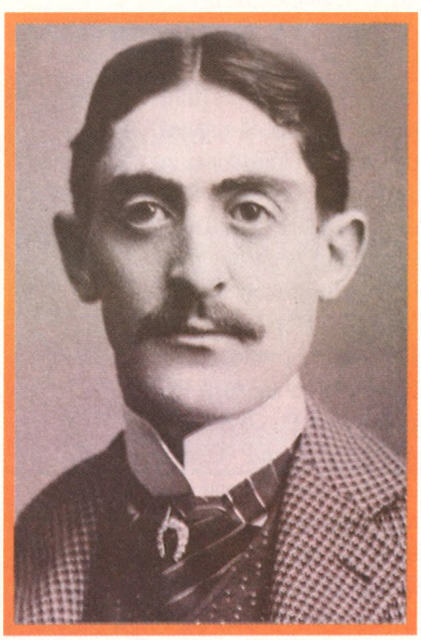
There are a few versions of what Corbett actually said, but all have the same meaning. Only restraint by his handlers prevented the violently angry McGovern from chasing after Corbett and beating him to a pulp before he reached the ring.

McGovern was still fuming when facing Corbett during referee Charlie White's fight instructions in the center of the ring. When White asked if they were ready, Terrible Terry nodded yes, but Corbett shook his head. "Sorry," he said, "my belt isn't right. I got to fix it." Stepping back to his corner, he and his trainer fiddled with the belt for a minute or so, while McGovern became more furious as he shuffled his feet waiting.

McGovern rushed Corbett at the bell, his usual style that terrorized his opponents before they could get set. As McGovern came with the first rush, Corbett smashed him squarely on the mouth with a right swing. McGovern staggered back dazed and surprised.

Both followed with a mixture of blows and at the close of the round, McGovern drew first blood with a right on Corbett's nose. Then McGovern was sent back on his heels with a right to the head. Corbett added more fuel to McGovern's rage by playing it cool in his corner with his arms stretched across the ropes and calmly enjoying being fanned.

They engaged in a furious rally in the second round. As McGovern's blows were going past Corbett's ears, the Denverite, cold as ice, pushed McGovern's head back with his left and quickly shot a right to the chin. Terrible Terry fell, laid there a moment, then crawled to the ropes and slowly pulled himself up to his feet with his back turned to Corbett. Corbett walked away and waited.



Corbett seemed an ideal opponent to McGovern's manager, Sam Harris. Corbett had been knocked out the year before he challenged McGovern, and Harris was willing to pay Corbett's way east to meet McGovern.

McGovern turned, saw his rival, and went for him with a bull-like rush. Corbett hit him once as he came in, but was beaten back against the ropes. As McGovern bombarded Corbett's head and body, Corbett covered up as best he could, letting McGovern punch himself out until he could slip away.

Corbett was in a tough spot, but he escaped and, still calm as ever, backed away toward the middle of the ring. McGovern, following him, wildly swung a vicious left to the head. Corbett let it slip by, then crossed with a right. McGovern stiffened, fell back, his head crashing on the ring floor, and laid still. The fight was over. It was Terrible Terry's giant step on the road downhill.

When the fallen champ returned to his home grounds, his followers refused to accept the result of the fight. Arguments were heard in the saloons of Brooklyn and most of them were about the closeness of the battle that could have gone either way until Corbett landed "that lucky punch."

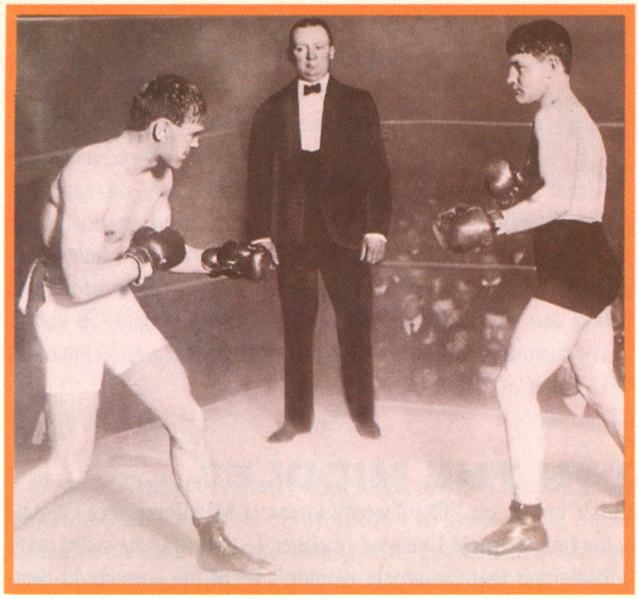
Others pointed out that Corbett was not the new champ since he weighed in at 126 pounds as against the featherweight limit of 123, and Corbett didn't claim the title at first. "I'll be known as the man who whipped McGovern," he said. "That's glory enough for me."

The ex-champ clamored for a return bout, but his conqueror, busy with theatrical engagements and a few bouts, made McGovern wait 16 months.

McGovern had only one fight in 1902—he knocked out Dave Sullivan in 15 rounds at Louisville, Kentucky, on February 22. Sullivan would not have lasted four rounds with the former champ at his best.

In 1903, McGovern fought a six-round no-decision bout with Joe Bernstein on February 6, and kayoed Billy Maynard, an often-defeated trialhorse, on February 25. Now fighting as a lightweight, he finally got his chance to avenge the humiliating defeat by Corbett. The return clash, on March 30 at the Twentieth Century Athletic Club, San Francisco, called for a guaranteed purse of $10,000 split on a 65-35 basis.

In the first round, McGovern was



McGovern's first meeting with Corbett proved to be the beginning of the end of his boxing career. Corbett beat McGovern to wrest the featherweight crown from him, then returned to beat Terrible Terry in the rematch.

dropped by a solid right to the jaw. He got to his feet, but appeared in a daze throughout the early rounds. He showed some old fighting spirit and was as game as ever, but Corbett held a confident edge in every round and added to the agony with obscene language during clinches that had McGovern boiling mad and swinging wildly, only to be battered by accurate counterpunches.

The end came in the 11th round. Tired, groggy, and unable to avoid a lightning-fast left and right to the jaw, Terrible Terry fell on the canvas in a heap. He attempted to rise at seven, but fell back and was counted out by referee Eddie Graney.

McGovern had no difficulty disposing of every man who defeated Corbett, but for some occult or psychological reason he was unable to cope with this one rival. After the close call he had encountered in his battle with Herrera, it appeared McGovern was slipping. But the two knockouts by Corbett, whose ability to goad McGovern into madness, proved his career was at an end.

Manager Harris kept after McGovern to hang up his gloves. It's no small task suggesting to a former champion to quit the ring, and Terrible Terry was no exception—he rested six months and got back into action.

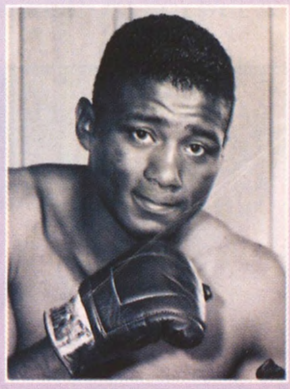
On September 26, he met Lew Ryall in a six-round no-decision bout, and had another on October 3 with Billy Willis. On October 20 he made a poor showing winning a 15-round decision over Jimmy Briggs. Harris again pleaded with McGovern to retire. This time he agreed, and Harris was elated. It removed the fear that McGovern might wind up a punch-drunk second-rater.

The retirement lasted only five months. On April 10, 1904, Terrible Terry ventured to St. Paul, Minnesota, and lost a close six-round decision to George Barton for the only decision loss of his career. McGovern fought on until May 27, 1908, when he fought a six-round no-decision bout with Spike Robinson in Philadelphia. Less than 10 years later, Terrible Terry was dead at the age of 37. ■

THE RING, January 1979

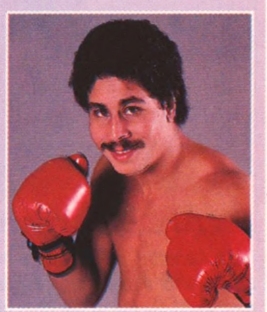
The Cover: The question was broached as to how Cuban amateur star Teofilo Stevenson would fare as a professional. The two-time Olympic heavyweight champion was fighting at Madison Square Garden, giving Americans a first-hand glimpse. The conclusion was that the plodding Stevenson would not last long against Muhammad Ali.

Championship Review: THE RING took a look back at the world title fights in 1978, including Mike Rossman's surprising victory over Victor Galindez to win the WBA light heavyweight title. The question surrounding Rossman was whether or not he could hold the belt against challengers like Matt Franklin, Yaqui Lopez, and Eddie Gregory.



Floyd Talks: Soft-spoken former heavyweight champ Floyd Patterson spoke about Muhammad Ali's recent victory over Leon Spinks in their rematch, the fact that people still recognize him, and how he learned more from his losses than his victories. "There will never be another mustache and beard, but I will never condemn myself for it," said the first two-time heavyweight champ.

Growing Up With The Greatest: THE RING goes back through time reflecting on the many triumphs of Muhammad Ali, noting that many fight fans began following the sport when Ali began fighting. After surviving controversy after controversy, Ali emerged as just what he declared himself to be from the start—The Greatest.



Fighter Of The Month: WBC super bantamweight champion Wilfredo Gomez earned the honors by remaining undefeated with a victory over previously unbeaten bantam champ Carlos Zarate. Gomez knocked Zarate down three times in the fourth round and stopped the future Hall of Famer in the fifth.

COME OUT WRITING

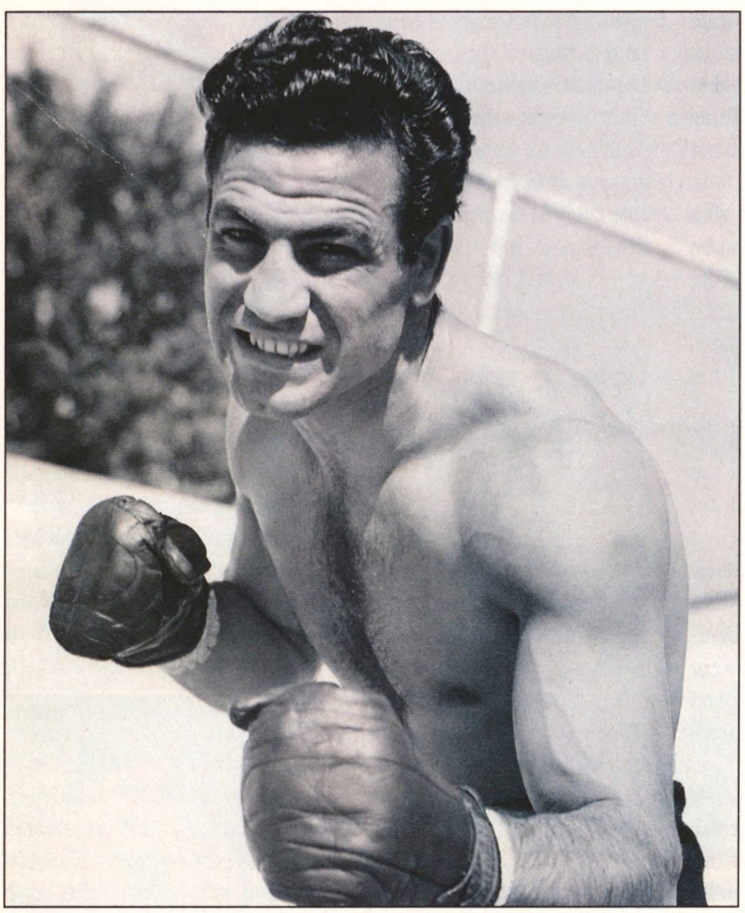
We welcome your letters, which may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

CALLING IT DOWN THE MIDDLE?

I have to say that William Dettloff's article on "The Twenty Greatest Middleweights Of All-Time" in the January 2001 issue was the fairest article I've read in either THE RING or its sister magazine *KO* in a long time. The early disclaimer that the article wouldn't be of the who-could-beat-whom variety made the entire piece equitable. RING and *KO* articles pitting fighters against each other in what-if matches often leave readers questioning how you can call yourselves authorities on the sport. (Case in point, an article that ran off the names of middleweights who would whip Roy Jones. I'm sorry, but Ray Robinson is the only middleweight who I could see beating Roy, and I think he even loses to Roy at 168. Any middleweight *could* beat Jones, but none of them would.)

Regardless of whether you agree with the placement of the middleweights in the article or not, you had to love the bios of each fighter, which made for interesting reading. True to the article's opening salvo, there were fighters listed that I never heard of, but the short dissertations helped you appreciate them anyway. An argument could be made for moving a fighter up or down on the list, but that would be nitpicking. The article was what it was: a true list of the 20 greatest middleweights.

ROB JOHNSON
New York, NY



Fred Apostoli deserved to be included in THE RING's list of the 20 greatest middleweights of all-time, according to reader Steven Madsen. Apostoli was a middleweight champ in the late-1930s who gave all-time great Billy Conn two tough fights.

In regards to your January 2001 story, "The Twenty Greatest Middleweights Of All-Time," I must take exception to the omission of Fred Apostoli, one of the best fighters to come out of San Francisco. He was the middleweight champ for more than two years, from 1937 to '39, and beat among others, Freddie Steele, Glen Lee, Solly Krieger, Marcel Thil, Young Corbett III, and Melio Bettina. He also had two tough fights against Billy Conn, who was rated 10th on your list.

Want more proof? Apostoli was THE RING's Fighter of the Year in 1943 and was named to the World Boxing Hall of Fame in '78. To say that fighters on your list like Bernard Hopkins, who fights two to three times a year, would beat Apostoli, who fought as many as 10 or 12 times a year, is ridiculous. Apostoli, the pride of North Beach, was one of the best fighters of the mid- to late-1930s.

STEVEN MADSEN
San Francisco, CA

DEFENDING ROY

Roy Jones is the best fighter in the world—period! I'm tired of hearing people criticize him for every little thing. He's unorthodox, he won't move up to heavyweight.

What does it matter? Nobody ever criticized Sugar Ray Robinson or Sugar Ray Leonard for not moving up to fight heavyweights, which is a ridiculous idea in the first place. Both of the aforementioned fighters went on to become great fighters in the history of boxing, and so will Jones, no matter what the skeptics say.

Jones is so unappreciated, people don't even realize the talent this man possesses. In the November 2000 issue, I saw you rearranged your pound-for-pound ratings and Shane Mosley was rated number one, ahead of Roy Jones. What the hell is that? No disrespect to Mosley or Felix Trinidad, but Roy Jones is clearly the best pound-for-pound fighter in the world. His skills are definitely unmatched.

GILBERT RODRIGUEZ
Houston, TX

On page 20 of your January 2001 issue, in the "Camera Clicks" section, you have a picture of my client, Roy Jones, being fingerprinted. You state that you would have guessed that Roy got caught in a "hit-and-run." I recognize the implication that Roy hits and doesn't take any punches in return. However, the inference that most readers would make is that Roy was being booked by the police for a hit-and-run accident. You well realize that Roy Jones has never been involved in anything close to committing a crime.

I realize you intended to take a facetious look at Roy's manner of fighting. In closing, I would like to point out that you consider great fighters on their record. I might also point out that up through his fight against Richard Hall, Roy Jones lost only one round in his preceding eight title fights, against the likes of Virgil Hill, Lou Del Valle, Reggie Johnson, and David Telesco. Maybe he's doing something right.

FREDRIC LEVIN
Pensacola, FL

QUIT TRASHING TYSON!

I have been a boxing fan ever since I can remember. I love the sport to no end, but now I have developed a hatred for the people surrounding the sport.

No matter what Mike Tyson does, you will never be happy or satisfied! You constantly bash his private life, which is none of your business, and what he has done outside the ring. Well, he paid for that already!

Does Mike Tyson, seen here showing his sensitive side, deserve all the criticism he receives? Reader Robert Blackwell certainly doesn't think so, and points out that heavyweight rivals Evander Holyfield and Lennox Lewis fight dirty as much as "Iron Mike" does.

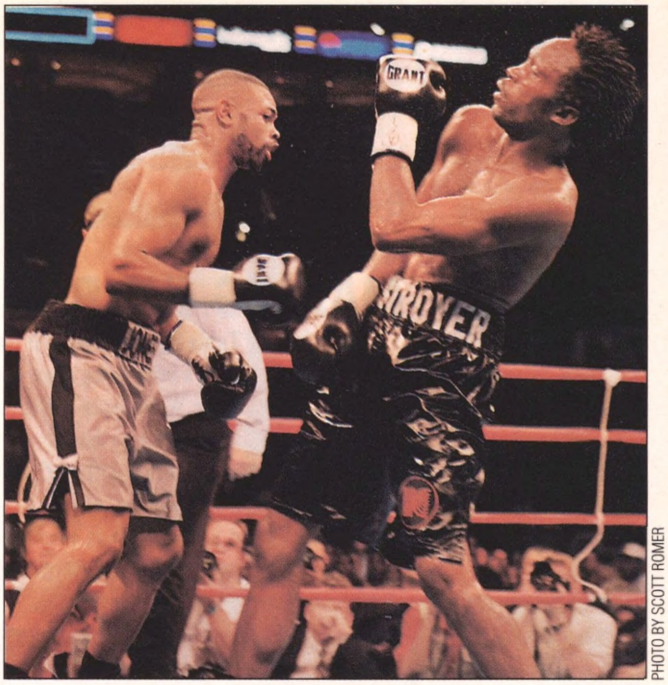


PHOTO BY SCOTT ROMER

Referee Wayne Kelly should have called the Roy Jones-Richard Hall fight sooner than he did, says reader Ric Munoz. Kelly was flirting with possible tragedy by letting the outgunned Hall fight on into the 11th round.

The lowest came when I was watching *Friday Night Fights*, seeing Teddy Atlas' face after the Tyson-Andrew Golota fight, talking crap about Tyson as usual, saying things like if Golota didn't quit, Tyson would have. First of all, when has Tyson ever quit? He may have gotten tired or hurt, but he never quit! People are constantly throwing his past in his face and reading into it what they would with no regard to the truth.

Point a finger at the so-called real champions: Evander Holyfield likes to wrestle, headbutt, and use elbows. Real champ there! Lennox Lewis holds and pulls people into his punches to increase the blow. Real champ there! Everyone is dirty, but Tyson is the only one who gets crapped on. If you dislike Tyson so much, then don't watch him fight!

ROBERT BLACKWELL
Bismarck, ND

KNOW WHEN TO SAY WHEN

This letter is in response to John Nagle's letter in the December 2000 issue of THE RING ("The Ref Got It Right"). He disagreed with Larry Merchant of HBO and Nigel Collins of THE RING concerning comments made about the questionable refereeing in the Roy Jones-Richard Hall fight by Wayne Kelly. When is enough enough? The Jones-Hall fight should have been stopped sooner. I commend Hall in having a great heart, but his pride could have killed him or done some serious damage to his brain. Wayne Kelly should be asked some serious questions as to why he let the fight go on for as long as it did. Do we want another Kid Paret? Do we want another Deuk-Koo Kim?

RIC MUNOZ
Bamberg, Germany ■

LOOKING AHEAD

By Eric Raskin

MAKING HIS BONES

When **Johnny Tapia** fights, the story is usually Johnny Tapia. If you're familiar with his fiery yet engaging personality and the "Vida Loca" he's been living since long before **Ricky Martin** was even in Menudo, you understand why. So when Tapia challenges for the WBA super bantamweight title in a few weeks, he'll probably be the main story, the one getting most of the press. But he won't be the *only* story.

The guy in the other corner will be **Clarence "Bones" Adams**, the champion from Kentucky, a smart boxer who can brawl, a smart talker with a drawl. Adams, who turned pro in 1990, three months before his 16th birthday, finally realized his dream and captured a world title in March 2000, when he dominated heavy favorite **Nestor Garza** over 12 memorable rounds. But he broke his right hand en route to the title victory, and struggled in his first defense against unknown **Andres Fernandez** five months later because he re-injured the hand before the fight. An operation soon followed, and Adams now looks forward to finally capitalizing on his breakout year in 2000 by making some money in 2001.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Adams is looking to topple Tapia (inset)

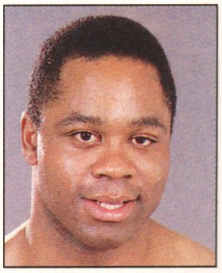
"I need a fight like Johnny Tapia to boost my career and have a payday," Adams said in early-December. "The money's not worked out yet, but it will be a career-high payday. For me, anything's a career-high payday. **Bob Arum** [who has promoted Adams' recent fights, but doesn't have Bones under contract] wants me to fight no-name Mexicans for no money. I want fights like Johnny Tapia."

The matchup is intriguing, as both Tapia and Adams are ideally suited to box, yet often inclined to slug. Both have veteran smarts and impeccable skills, with Tapia probably being a shade faster, Adams slightly more powerful.

"He's going to have a lot of problems with me," Adams said, "but I'll have problems with him, too. I acknowledge that. Nobody I ever faced compares to Johnny in terms of skills. He's a great boxer. But he's not too much of a puncher. I'm a boxer-puncher. If I hit you, I'm going to hurt you. And he's never fought a full-fledged 122-pounder before.

"It's going to be a very entertaining fight. I can't guarantee **Trinidad-Vargas**, but it will be a crowd-pleaser. And not only do I gotta win, I gotta win impressively. And that's what I plan to do."

LISTEN UP



Johnson: In line for Lewis

Three of the four U.S. Olympians who won medals in Sydney will be making their pro debuts on the January 27 *KO Nation* show from The Theater at Madison Square Garden. Silver medalist **Ricardo Williams Jr.** and bronze medalists **Jermain Taylor** and **Clarence Vinson**, along with heavyweight **Michael Bennett**, will be on the broadcast. (The other American medal winner, **Ricardo "Rocky" Juarez**, has signed with Main Events and was set to debut on Showtime) ... The rematch for the WBA heavyweight belt between **Evander Holyfield** and **John Ruiz** was just about finalized for March 10 in Las Vegas as we went to press. As for the *real* heavyweight title, all indications are that **Lennox Lewis'** next defense will come sometime in the spring against **Kirk Johnson** ... **Erik Morales'** challenge of WBC featherweight champ **Guty Espadas** is finally a go for February 17 on HBO ... **James Page**, who was stripped of the WBA welterweight belt for pulling out of his August 2000 defense against **Andrew "Six Heads" Lewis**, will get a chance to regain the title—but he'll have to go through Six Heads anyway. According to **Lee Samuels** of Top Rank, who recently signed Lewis, the fight for the vacant strap is on for early-2001, though no specific date had been finalized as of press time ... The well-travelled WBA lightweight title, which has changed hands five times in the last 30 months, may return to a familiar waist on February 17. That's when vulnerable titlist **Takanori Hatakeyama** is scheduled to take on **Julien Lorcy**, who held the belt briefly in '99 ... The comeback within a comeback of **Tony Ayala** starts up in April, when he picks on someone his own age (actually, nine months his senior), **Hector Camacho**. While this one doesn't promise the thrills of Ayala's fire fight with **Yory Boy Campas**, it should be interesting to see if Ayala, 37 years old and somewhat of a plodder, can hunt down the still-elusive "Macho Man." ■

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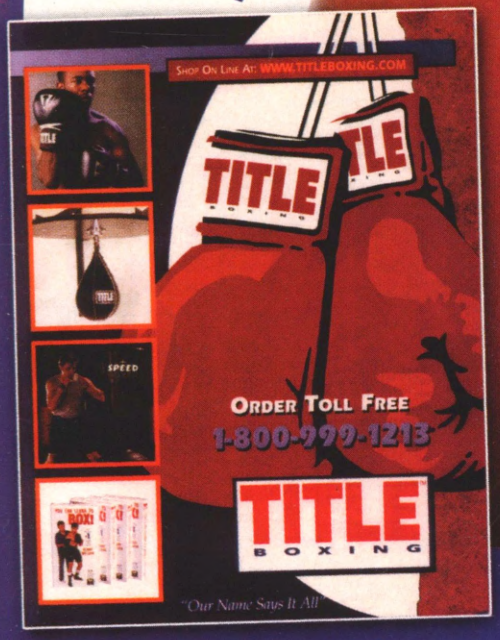

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